

THE
WORKS
OF
Mrs. *Eliza Haywood.*

VOL. III.

CONTAINING,

- I. IDALIA; or, The UNFORTUNATE MISTRESS: A Novel. In three Parts.
- II. Letters from a LADY OF QUALITY to a CHEVALIER. Translated from the *French*. To which is added, A DISCOURSE concerning Writings of that Nature, by way of Essay.



L O N D O N,

Printed for DAN. BROWNE Jun^r. at the *Black-Swan* without *Temple-Bar*; and SAM. CHAPMAN, at the *Angel* in *Pallmall*. M.DCC.XXIV.

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OF

Mrs. Anna Heywood.

VOL. III.

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I. ITALIA; OR, THE UNFORTUNATE
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II. LARION FROM A LADY OF QUALITY FOR
CUREVALTER. Taken from the French. To
which is added, A DISCOURSE concerning
Writings of that Nature by way of Epilog.



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— In vain from Fate we fly,
For first or last, as all must die,
So fit as much distressed as
Their fate, as all must die,
—

INDALIA:

2. The History of the most famous and virtuous Prince of Denmark, in three Parts. The fourth Edition Corrected.

Unfortunate Mistress.

3. The History of the most famous and virtuous Prince of Denmark, in three Parts. The fourth Edition Corrected.

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IDA LIA:

OR, THE

Unfortunate Mistress.

A

NOVEL.

Written by Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Under how hard a Fate are Women born !
Priz'd to their Ruin, or expos'd to Scorn :
If we want Beauty, we of Love despair ;
And are besieg'd, like Frontier Towns, if Fair.*

Waller.

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IDA LIA:

OR

The Unfortunate Mistress.



IF there were a Possibility that the Warmth and Vigour of Youth could be temper'd with a due Consideration, and the Power of Judging rightly; how easy were it to avoid the Ills which most of us endure? How few would be unhappy? With what Serenity might the *Noon* of Life glide on, could we account with reason for our *Morning* Actions! We hear, indeed, daily Complaints of the Cruelty of *Fate*, but if we examine the Source, we shall find almost all the Woes we languish under are self-caus'd; and that either

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to pursue the Gratification of some unruly Passion, or fly the Performance of an incumbent Duty, those Misfortunes which so fill the World derive their Being: and would more justly merit *Condemnation* than *Compassion*, were not the Fault too universal.

DON *Bernardo de Bellsache*, a Nobleman of *Venice*, had a Daughter whom he esteem'd the Blessing of his Age; and had her Conduct been such as might have been expected from the Elegance of her Genius and the Improvements of Education which his Fondness had indulg'd her in, she had indeed been the Wonder of her Sex. Imagination cannot form a Face more exquisitely Lovely; such Majesty, such Sweetness, such a Regularity in all her Features, accompany'd with an Air at once so soft, so striking, that while she *commanded* she *allur'd*, and *forc'd* what she *entreated*. Nor was her Shape and Mien less worthy Admiration; it was impossible for any thing to be more exactly proportion'd than the *former*, and for the *latter* it had a Grace peculiar to itself: the least and most careless Motion of her Head or Hand, was sufficient to captivate a Heart. In fine, her Charms were so infinitely above description, that it was necessary to see her, to have any just Notion of her.—But alas! to what end serv'd all this Beauty, these uncommon Qualifications, but to make her more remarkably unhappy? She had a *Wit*, which gain'd her no fewer Adorers than her other Perfections; yet not enough to defend her from the Assaults of almost every Passion Human Nature is liable to fall into. The Great-
ness

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ness of her Spirit (which from her Childhood had been untameable, or was render'd so thro the too great Indulgence of her doating Parents) made her unable to endure Controll, disdainful of Advice, obstinate, and peremptory in following her own *Will* to what Extremes soever it led her: The Consequence of such a Disposition could not be expected to be very fortunate, but it brought on her such dreadful Inconveniences, as all who find in themselves the least Propensity to be of such a Humour, ought to tremble at the Repetition of, and exert their utmost Reason to extirpate.

IDALIA (for that was the Name of this Lovely Inconsiderate) had no sooner arriv'd at her Fourteenth Year, than she attracted the Eyes of all the young Noblemen of *Venice*; scarce a Heart but sigh'd for her: The Shrine of our *Blessed Lady* of *Loretto* was never throng'd with greater numbers of *Religious Devotees* than *Don Bernardo's* House was by those of the Young and Gay; and happy did they think themselves whose Birth or Fortune gave them any just cause to hope the Pretensions they brought would be an Offering worth acceptance. There were some too (as no Climate is barren of *Fops*) who had the Vanity, without either of these Advantages, to promise themselves Success; of this last number was *Florez*, one who if he had not been possess'd with more Assurance than is ordinarily to be found even among the most Tenacious, would not have presumed, tho his Passion had been really as violent as he endeavour'd to make it appear,

to have declared it. He was descended from a Family in which there never had been one whose Actions had entitl'd him to bear Arms; the height of his Parents Ambition had been to prefer him, when a Child, to be Page to *Don Ferdinand* Nephew to the *Doge*: With this young Nobleman he had travell'd, and all the Education he was master of, was owing to this Advantage; as was the Post he possess'd in the Army, to his Favour. For being naturally of a designing sordid Disposition, by falling in with all his Humours, promoting his Pleasures, and flattering his Vices, he had wound himself so much into the Good-will of his Lord, that he refused him nothing. The Intimacy with which he was treated by so great a Man, and the sudden Elevation of his Fortune, join'd to some fulsome Praises of his Beauty, and fine Air, which those Women who are paid for their Favours generally lavish on the Person who makes choice of them, gave him so good an opinion of his own Merit, that he thought it an Impossibility for any Woman to be insensible of it, and look'd on the Attainment of *Idalia*, notwithstanding the multitude of her Admirers, and the vast Possessions she was likely to be mistress of, as a thing not at all difficult.

BUT whatever he imagin'd to himself, *Bernardo* had Sentiments quite different from these: He no sooner discover'd his Design, than he forbid him his House in terms which sufficiently told him he was in earnest, and chid his Daughter for entertaining a Proposal so unsuitable to her Birth, with more sharpness

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ness than the manner in which he had ever behaved to her could give her leave to think was in his Nature. But as the Vanity and unthinking Pride which sway'd the Actions of this young Lady had show'd itself in the encouraging all who pretended to admire her, of what degree soever they were ; so now the Obstinacy of her Humour began to appear, in the Uneasiness she felt at her Father's Commands, never to see *Florez* more. Amidst the multiplicity of her Adorers, she thought herself undone to miss the Addressee of a single Votary, and could not bear to lose the Conversation of a Man whose Eyes and Tongue were perfectly skill'd in the Art of Flattery and Dissimulation, and had given her so many Informations of her Power. And wholly leaving herself to the Dictates of her Impatience, grew almost distracted to think she was debarr'd the Enjoyment of any thing she found a pleasure in. She began immediately to lessen her Regard for her too long indulgent Father, which by degrees ripen'd to a Contempt of him, and ended in a Resolution to act in every thing according to her Inclinations, without giving herself any pain how far it would be consonant to his.

IN this ruinous Disposition it came into her head to write to *Florez*, not that she was really in *Love* with him, or had yet any notion of that Passion ; but *Vanity*, that reigning Faculty of her Soul, prompted her to use her utmost Efforts for the retrieving a Heart she began to fear was estranged. And indeed this Conjecture was not in the least unreasonable ;
for

for had he, in sincerity, been so entirely devoted to her as he had once endeavour'd to persuade her he was, *Love* always fruitful in Invention would have furnish'd him with some Stratagem, either to have seen her or convey'd a Letter to her; for some Weeks had pass'd between the time of his being forbid his Visits, and that in which she writ. She did not fail to upbraid him with his Coldness, but withall let him know she had Good-nature enough to pardon it; desired an Answer, and that for the future, if she was really happy enough to retain any place in his Remembrance, he would let no Day escape without giving her some Assurances of it. In short, no Woman who felt the severest Pangs of desperate dying Love could write more passionately, or express a greater Concern at being abandon'd by the Man her Soul was fond of, than what the Spirit of *Coquetry* taught the Pen of the Inconsiderate *Idalia*. She concluded her Epistle with a hearty Wish, *Grant Heaven!* (said she to herself) *that I may once more have him in my power to use him as I please, let the Consequence be what it will.* She bribed a Servant to deliver it, and bring an Answer back: but the Uneasiness she was in till the Return of her Messenger, was such, as whoever had been witness of, could not have imagin'd to have sprung from any other Source than Love. But to such a degree does the immoderate Love of Praise transport some People, that to lose any opportunity of receiving it, is a Torment equal to that which others feel in a Disappointment of the most essential Blessings.

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THE Return of her Emiffary brought but little Eafe to the Suspence ſhe had endur'd while he was gone : *Florez* indeed had ſent by him, but his Letter appear'd ſo different from thoſe ſhe had formerly receiv'd from him, that the Hand was all that ſhow'd 'em writ by the ſame Perſon. A Penetration like hers could eaſily diſcern the Alteration ; ſhe found the Stile was forc'd, formal, and affected, and where he ſaid he ſtill continu'd to adore her, and ſhould never ceaſe to do ſo, it was in ſuch a manner as plainly ſhow'd his Heart had no part in dictating ſuch Expreſſions : And, in truth, never Woman was more diſappointed in her Aim, than was this Lady. In ſpite of the Attractions ſhe was miſtreſs of, *Florez* had either an Inſenſibility of them, or had Reſolution enough to withſtand the Emotions of his Tenderneſs, whenever he found 'em contrary to his Inter-eſt. 'Tis probable, by what after enſu'd, that a Daughter of *Don Bernardo's*, tho never ſo diſagreeable, would have had Charms ſufficient to have retain'd his Adorations ; but *Idalia*, all lovely as ſhe was, without the addition of that Fortune her Father's Conſent muſt give, had no longer any Charms to hold him.

'TIS eaſy to imagine it was no ſmall ſhock to her Pride, to find the Advances ſhe had made were receiv'd with no more Warmth : but ſuffering all Conſiderations to be wholly drown'd in the o'erflowing Folly which at preſent poſſeſs'd her, ſhe continued daily by Letters to give him occaſion to believe there
was

was nothing on Earth so desirable as his Conversation, and that it was not impossible she might be prevail'd on to become his Wife, tho' by it she should lose a Father; but there was not the least Pressure in any of his Answers, which testified he wish'd she should run so great a risque. This so nettled her, that at last, 'tis probable, she would have lock'd upon him, as indeed he was, a Conquest far unworthy of the pains she had taken. She was just beginning to give over all thoughts of him, when her ill Fate taking the advantage of the *Baseness* of his Nature, and the unaccountable *Fantastickness* of her's, gave a sudden Turn to this Adventure, which was to terminate in her utter undoing.

IF there can be any thing to be alledg'd in the Defence of Vanity, the fair *Idalia* on the account of her Youth, her Beauty, Birth, and Fortune, had certainly more to plead in her behalf than where there were none of these Advantages. *Florez*, who had nothing distinguishably valuable either in his Person or Accomplishments, and was of a Sex in which that *Foible* is far less excusable than in the weaker; had yet as large a share; he could not imagine himself belov'd by a Woman so admired by all the World, without communicating the Secret. To those *Insensibles* all the Pleasure of an *Amour* consists in the *Reputation* of it. To be accounted well in the Esteem of a Person of ordinary Qualifications, yields them infinitely more Satisfaction than the *real Enjoyment* of one of the most *Excellent* could do. It is not therefore to be wonder'd at, that a Man, who

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who had neither Love nor Honour to restrain him, triumph'd in an Affair like this: He could not hear the Charms of *Idalia* mention'd without letting the Company know how much it was in his power to become master of them; and to prove the Truth of what he said, expos'd her Letters, those fatal and undisputable Testimonials of her Folly. Few that had any acquaintance with him, were strangers to his Happiness, but none more envy'd his Good-fortune than his Patron *Don Ferdinand*. This young Lord was of a Disposition exceeding amorous: He long had view'd *Idalia* with those Desires which it was common for her to inspire, but finding in himself not the least Propensity to Marriage, and believing it impossible to obtain her by any other means, had endeavour'd to stifle the hopeless Passion, by other Amusements, till hearing the Condescensions she had made to one whom he had so much power over, he immediately had it in his thoughts to make use of it for the Gratification of his Wishes. There needed but little Ceremony in the communicating his Design to a Person so much his Creature; nor durst *Florez*, if he had had an Inclination, oppose what he required; but on the contrary, he was glad of an Opportunity of serving him in a manner which would so considerably advance his Interest with him. It was presently agreed between them, that he, the favour'd Lover, should write to *Idalia* in the most passionate and moving strain imaginable, assuring her that nothing was so insupportable as the Pangs of Absence, that he died to see her, and entreat her to grant him that Favour

at the House of a particular Friend, whom he mention'd in the Letter, and gave her Directions how to find it. This Epistle being dictated by the impatient Wishes of the amorous *Ferdinand*, had infinitely more force of Persuasion in it, than any thing the Insensible *Florez* could have said without his assistance; and they both promised themselves it would succeed as they would have it, to engage her to come to the place appointed for the Assignment, which was a House where they had frequently rioted in those dissolute Enjoyments Youth is too prone to be fond of, and the People who lived in it entirely at the devotion of *Don Ferdinand*.

BY this cursed Contrivance was the rash unthinking *Idalia* betray'd: She receiv'd the fraudulent Mandate, swallow'd the well-dress'd artful Flattery it contain'd with a prodigious deal of Pleasure, and return'd an Answer of Consent. Not that she was without a thought at the liberty he took in naming a Place of Assignment; since it had been much more agreeable to the *Venetian* Address, to have watch'd her coming out, follow'd her to Church, or any other publick Place, and at an humble Distance gazed upon her: but she imputed his Boldness to the Violence of his Passion, and having no other design than to make him the Slave of her Beauty, resolv'd to see him, the better to secure her Conquest, and punish him *hereafter* by her Contempt and Coldness, for his *present* Presumption.

The Unfortunate Mistress. II

A DORN'D, and every Charm illustrated with all the Aids of Art ! assured of Victory ! and already exulting with a prideful Scorn for the Triumphs of her Eyes ! she set out, under the pretence of going to *Vespers*, attended only by one Servant, whom she sent back immediately to fetch her *Beads*, which she told him she had forgot ; and as soon as she saw herself at liberty, turn'd another way, and went directly to the place appointed. 'Twas easy for her to find the House, the good *Woman* of it waited at the door for her approach, and conducted her in ; but 'tis hard to say whether her Astonishment, or Fear, was most predominant, when instead of *Florez* she found herself accosted by *Don Ferdinand* : Glad would she have been to have had it in her power to have gone back, and pretending to have come in only thro' mistake, would fain have struggled to the door. ' No, Lovely Creature, cry'd the o'er-joy'd Ferdinand, (who guessing what her Intent would be, had taken care to hold fast both her Hands) to what good Star soever I am indebted for this Blessing, I should prove myself strangely unworthy of it, could I so easily be brought to quit it.—I long have languish'd with a Passion great as your own unequal'd Charms, and for an Opportunity to tell you so, would have hazarded more than my Life.—Hear it then now with patience, nor hate the Man who aims at no higher Happiness from your Favour, than to be pitied and forgiven.' These last Words dissipated great part of the Terror she had been in ; and reassuming that Air of Haughtiness

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which her Disorders had a little abated, ' I
 ' know not, my Lord, *answer'd she*, whether
 ' I should consider what you have said to me
 ' as the Effects of Gayety or Sincerity; if to
 ' the former, I ought not to resent it, be-
 ' cause few Men but would have behav'd in
 ' the same manner to a Woman whom Chance
 ' had so unexpectedly thrown in their way: but
 ' if to the latter, when future Services shall
 ' testify it, I owe more to the Quality and
 ' Merits of *Don Ferdinand*, than not to ac-
 ' knowledge myself obliged to his Regard.
 ' You are divinely good, *resum'd the other*, and
 ' I hope, since I am but too sensible, whatever
 ' Accident occasion'd me this Happiness, it
 ' was not Chance, but the Design of meeting
 ' a more favour'd Lover brought you here,
 ' you will permit me to entertain you with the
 ' History of my Passion, at least till his Ap-
 ' proach shall cut me off.'

THAT Serenity which had so lately re-
 turn'd to the Soul of *Idalia*, at hearing this, again
 forsook her; she had no room to doubt the Se-
 cret of her Correspondence with *Florez* was
 discover'd: and in a moment had a thousand
 various Conjectures by what means, but had
 too great an Opinion of her own Power, and his
 Passion, to hit upon the right. She was silent
 for some time, not knowing whether it was
 best to confess, or deny the Truth of what
 he alledged; at last, reflecting on the Confi-
 dence with which *Don Ferdinand* had spoke,
 was an Evidence he was assured of it, and
 that the coming of *Florez*, whom she expected
 every moment, would render all she could
 say

The Unfortunate Mistress. 13

say ineffectual, concluded on acknowledging the Reality: but withall told him, as she very well might, that it was not to gratify any other Passion than the Love of a little unmeaning Gallantry in her Humour, which had moved her to consent to such a Meeting. This Declaration seem'd to transport the Soul of him 'twas made to, and he continued to address her with so much elegant Tenderness, and lively Assurances of the Influence of her Charms, that the Conversation would have afforded her an Infinity of Satisfaction, had it been at any other time and place; but the Disrespect she imagin'd herself treated with by the Delay of *Florez*, poison'd the Felicity which else the gaining a new Adorer of *Don Ferdinand's* Rank would have given her: she sat for a considerable time divided between Pain and Pleasure, till it growing late, and not knowing what Excuse to make for being so long miss'd at home, she rose to take her leave: But alas! she was now in a Place whence it was not usual for one of her Sex to return as they came in, and in the power of one, who was not of a Humour to put a constraint on his Inclinations. She soon perceiv'd the fatal Truth, and now condemned the indiscreet hazard she had run, resolv'd in her Mind never to be guilty of the like, and begg'd of Heaven to protect her Honour, and inspire her with some Artifice with which she might elude the Danger which so imminently threaten'd her.

BUT what Miseries sometimes does one rash Action bring on the whole Series of Life?

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14 IDALIA: or,

Repentance, and a sudden Abhorrence of that Vanity which had led her into this Snare, were now in vain; her evil Genius watch'd this Point of Time, when every friendly Planet was oppress'd, and only raging Influences govern'd, to ruin her, at *once*, for ever. At first, with Sighs, with Tears, with humble Adorations, the amorous *Ferdinand* sought to melt her into Kindness; but they failing, the burning Passion threw off all Restraint, his every Action spoke his Resolution, and told her he would not be deny'd——plainly she read it in his fiery Eyes, and felt it in his eager Graspings.——The Reader's Imagination here can only form an Idea of that Confusion! that mingled Rage and Horror! which, at this dreadful Exigence, fill'd the Soul of the unhappy *Idalia*; 'tis not in Words to represent it.——Sometimes, disdainful of the injurious Attempt, her stormy Anger vented itself in Curses; but then remembering how little she had the Power of resisting whatever his wild Desires might prompt him to commit, she sunk to milder Treatment, wept, begg'd him to desist——Prayers,——Threatnings,——Entreaties, and Revilings alternately succeeded, as the different Agitations rose in her Breast, till at last she had no Breath to utter either. Her Spirits, fatigued with this unusual Hurry, and all her Limbs tir'd in the Struggle with such unequal Strength, she fainted as he held her in his Arms: As much bent as he was on making himself Master of his Wishes, he could not resolve to indulge 'em so far as to take any immodest Advantage of this Opportunity; but endeavouring by gentle

The Unfortunate Mistress. 15

gentle Means to bring her to herself, and expressing the most tender Concern imaginable for the Disorder he had occasion'd her, she began at the return of Thought to hope his Sentiments were chang'd; and falling on her Knees, the moment she recovered, 'Oh! my Lord, said she, if Honour, Love, or Pity have any influence o'er your Soul, by that I would conjure you to forbear to fright a wretched Maid, whom Inadvertency has thrown into your power.—Permit me to depart uninjur'd, unpolluted, and here I swear by every thing that's sacred, of all your Sex you shall be dearest to me.——O moving Words! interrupted Ferdinand, what Wonders may they not inforce! Is it then possible that you do not hate me?——But, continued he with a Sigh, how full of Vanity must I be to credit them!—No, Madam, no, the Artifice is plain; you fear my Power, and would delude my Wishes by a false Hope: but know I love too well, too violently, to leave aught to hereafter, which this Moment may bestow.——If you would have me think you mean my Happiness, give me an instant Proof.——Now make me blest, and I shall feed Imagination with hope of future Favours.'——In speaking this, he mingled some Freedoms, which left but little room to hope that any thing could save her; yet thinking still to sooth him would be the most effectual way, 'Oh Heavens! resumed she, (struggling with all her Force) will you not then allow something to my Sex's Modesty? Time, and Assiduity, may make me yours, and spare you the Guilt of Force.'——He would

would not suffer her to proceed, but renewing his Pressures, 'To wait a slow Consent, *said he*, would little suit the Violence of a Passion such as I profess: The God of Love disdains all dull Delays.—Swiftly the *zealous* Votary rushes on his Wish, and baffles Opposition; cuts off, at once, Sighs, Tears, Entreaties, all the Repulses that stubborn Virtue, or Affectation inspire in the relentless Fair, and proves the *Deity*, indeed, Almighty.—Believe me, Lovely Maid, the whining Wretch who fues at slavish Distance, dies at your feet, nor dares aspire to seize what Passion aims at, is but in show a Lover, the Flame he boasts, enervate, weak, and spiritless like his Attacks: but I by Deeds shall testify how much——How much thou art a Villain, (*cry'd Idalia, transported at once with Horror, Shame, and Rage*) Thou Monster! thou Brutal Ravisher! But since thou hast lost all Regard due to thy own Honour, and my Birth and Fame, die (*continued she, snatching a Dagger, which, his upper Garment flying open in the Struggle, just then discovered itself*) die by her Hand whom thou so basely dost attempt to wrong.' It was as much as he could do, by leaping lightly from her, to ward the Blow her Indignation had design'd. It would have been easy for him to have wrested it from her afterwards; but she perceiving his Intent, turn'd the Point to her own Breast, and invoking all the Saints and Angels to be witnesses of her Vow, swore she would strike it thro' her Heart the moment he attempted to disarm her. 'No, barbarous Man (*pursu'd she*) whatever mistaken No-

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The Unfortunate Mistress. 17

‘ tions the Levity and fond Belief of some of
‘ our weak Sex may have inspired thee with,
‘ thou now shalt find there’s one among us
‘ who dares meet Death to fly Dishonour—
‘ Since deaf to all the Considerations of my
‘ noble Family, and *Bernardo’s* Power, behold
‘ and tremble at my *Virtue’s* Bravery!—Blest
‘ now with means to escape thy vile Design,
‘ I can no longer fear thee, nor need debase
‘ my just Disdain so far as to entreat thee.’

The Fire which now darted from her Eyes, the assured Accent of her Voice, and the resolute Air of all her Motions, sufficiently declared she would make no scruple of fulfilling the Protestation she had made: *Don Ferdinand* was too sensibly alarm’d at it, to put it to the venture, but immediately form’d a Stratagem which seem’d more likely to succeed. Making use, therefore, of that Diffimulation which those who study the undoing Art are so well vers’d in, he dress’d his Eyes, and Face, in Looks far different from those they lately wore; an humble Admiration now seem’d to take up all his Thoughts, and aw’d Desire seem’d fearful to appear. He prostrated himself before her, acknowledged the Temerity of his Attempt, conjured her either to forgive him, or plunge the Dagger where she first design’d it, swore he would not live in her Displeasure; and accompanied all he said with so many Sighs, and such well-counterfeited Contrition, that either her Vanity, (which often inclines Women too readily to pardon those Faults which they imagine caused by the Force of their own Charms, and the Violence of the Lover’s Passion) her Good-Nature, or per-

haps a secret Liking of his Person, made it impossible for her to deny what he so earnestly entreated : the Grant, however, was not without Limitation; she forgave all he had done, but on condition he never should repeat it, and that he would not oppose her immediate Return to her Father's House. 'Far be it from my Thoughts, *replied the artful Ferdinand*; 'this moment would I deny my fond, gazing, Eyes the Joy of looking on you, had I not yet one Request to make, which if refused, I have no more to do but die.' 'What is it? *said Idalia*; after having obtain'd a Pardon for your injurious Design upon my Honour, it must be something beyond what I can comprehend that I should think difficult to grant.'—'Love ever is accompanied with Fears, *resumed he*; and that it is something relating to that, the Terrors I am in to ask it, may inform you. Let me conjure you then, by all that Heavenly Softness in your Disposition, to tell me, and tell me truly, (for fain would I flatter my ambitious Wishes with a Hope my Services in time might move you) if I can gain your Noble Father's Leave to make my humble Application, will you consent to hear me? Is not there something in my Form, or Manner, which will repel the soft Efforts of Love?—O speak! (*continued he, perceiving she was silent*) I dread the Certainty, yet am unable to endure the Tortures of Suspence.'—'I know not, *answer'd she, blushing*, if it be consistent with a Virgin's Modesty to answer a Demand like this, but something sure must be allow'd to the Quality and Merits of Don Ferdinand; nor

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‘ nor will my Sex condemn my easy Nature,
‘ when to such exalted Accomplishments I
‘ throw off Affectation, and confess I shall
‘ with Pride, and Pleasure, listen to the Vows
‘ my *Father* shall command me to receive from
‘ you.’

THO nothing could be more distant from the Soul of *Don Ferdinand* than the Design of soliciting *Bernardo* on any such account, yet the feigning it was of infinite service to gain Time, which was all he wanted : Examining the Hours, they found the Night was so far spent, that *Idalia* was at her wits end to think what Excuse she should make for her long Absence. *Ferdinand* taking the advantage of her Fear, ‘ *Madam, said he, tho I much doubt*
‘ all I can say, after the Presumption I have
‘ been guilty of, will be suspected, I would
‘ advise you not to go home till Morning :
‘ You will have time enough by then to think
‘ of something plausible to allay your Father’s
‘ Concern,—or you may go early to some Lady of your Acquaintance, and engage her to pretend you have been with her all night.—
‘ Till then, this House is at your devotion;
‘ you shall be serv’d in all as you command,
‘ and to prevent your Fears of my relapsing
‘ into my late Error, I will myself go out of
‘ it.” What cannot an artful Diffimulation engage one to ! *Idalia* believed him now so entirely her Convert, that what he counsell’d did not in the least alarm her ; and the good Opinion she now had of him, and the Uncertainty in what manner she should excuse herself at home, made her willing to accept it.

She had a little shock, however, at lying at a House, which by the Liberties Don *Ferdinand* had taken in it she could not imagine to be held by People of Honour: but the seeming penitent Lover removing that Scruple by assuring her that they were so much at his devotion, that as soon as they saw there was an Alteration in his Humour, theirs would immediately acquiesce; she at last consented to remain there till Morning, but told him she expected the Performance of his Promise of going away himself. ‘Madam (*answered he*) not all the Reluctance I feel in myself at quitting the Roof where all my Hopes are treasur’d, shall oblige me to disobey you: I go this moment, and that no needless Fears may disturb the Repose I wish you, I intreat you will see me from the Door, and take with you the Key which alone could be the Passport to admit me here again.’ *Idalia* was so well pleas’d with the Care he express’d of her Quiet, that she again, at his entreaty, confirm’d the Pardon she had already granted, and took leave of him with a Countenance which testified her Words were in no way contradictory to her Heart.

AFTER his Departure, having taken the Key, as he desired her to do, into her possession, she suffer’d herself to be conducted by the People of the House into a Chamber, and was not long before she went to bed: but it was impossible for Sleep to have any power over her; Imagination was too busy to suffer the dull God’s approach, the pleasure she took in being admir’d was too much rooted in her

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her Nature, for the late Danger it had brought her into, to erase; and the Joy of having an Adorer such as *Don Ferdinand*, made full amends for the Frights some part of his Behaviour had put her in. From this Contemplation, which afforded her only *Delight*, she fell into one altogether as *vexatious*, which was the Neglect that *Florez* had treated her with, in not coming to the Place he had appointed her to be at; and if she could have believed it possible for any Man, who had *seen* her, to *resign* her to a Rival, she would not have been a stranger to the Truth: for she, as well as all who had any acquaintance with him, was sensible of the Obligations he had to *Ferdinand*. But *this* was the last Reason she could form, it was not without the greatest difficulty in the world she could bring herself to any Notion of it, and perhaps should have found out some other Motive for his Behaviour, less disagreeable to her to believe, if her Cogitations had not met with an Interruption she was far from thinking of.

SHE had look'd on herself as safe, where she now was, as in her *Father's* House, thro the double Security of her *Lover's* Conversion and having the Key of the Door; but, alas! she too soon discover'd her Mistake. She had not been an hour in Bed, before she felt the Clothes thrown off, and something catch fast hold of her: The Voice and Actions of the Person told her it was no other than *Don Ferdinand*, as did his own Behaviour and Confession afterward, that the Story of his Repentance was but forg'd, the easier to betray her, and the

the Delivery of the Key only an Artifice to engage her Trust; there being a Back-Door to the House, by which he immediately entered, and came into the Chamber thro' a Closet, which had a Passage into another Room.

WHAT was now the Distraction of this unhappy Lady, waked from her Dream of Vanity to certain Ruin! Unavoidable Destruction! She rav'd, she tore, did all that Woman could, but all in vain——In the midst of Shrieks and Tremblings, Cries, Curfes, Swoonings, the impatient *Ferdinand* perpetrated his Intent, and finished her Undoing.

IN the mean time, the careful *Father* had been in all the Anxiety imaginable, he had sent to every Place where he had hope to find her, in search of his Darling Daughter; till at last, all his Endeavours being vain, and the Lateness of the Night not bringing her, assured him she could not be detained by any Occasion which could merit his Approbation, he flew to her Chamber, broke open her Cabinet, believing there might be a Probability of some Discovery; and finding there the Letters she had received from *Florez*, and, amongst the rest, that last fatal one which mention'd the Place of Assignment, he concluded her lost; that either she had disposed of herself to some unworthy Match, or had been deluded into a much worse Inconvenience: He could do nothing till Morning, either for his Satisfaction or Revenge; and all who have known the Grief of a beloved Child's Undoing, will easily guess at his. At break of day he sent to the

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the Officers of Justice for a *Mission* to search that House, and produced the Paper which had occasion'd his requiring it: it was immediately granted, and he had soon been inform'd of the whole Transaction, had not the strangest Accident that ever was, skreen'd the injurious Contrivers of it for some time from the Punishments their Crime was worthy of.

DON *Ferdinand* was endeavouring by all the Persuasions he was Master of, to bring the ruin'd Fair to an opinion she was not so unhappy as she thought herself; but all that he could say was ineffectual to give a moment's Cessation to the Tempest of her Fury: had any Means of Death been in her power, she would certainly not have out-lived the Loss of Honour; but as he had taken care of that, all she could do was to lament it. As they were thus employ'd, a loud knocking at the Chamber-Door obliged the surpriz'd Lover to quit his Bed, and see what had occasion'd it. It was *Florez*, who happening to pass by Don *Bernardo's* Door, had seen a great Croud about it, and enquiring the Reason, was told they were going in search of the young Lady of that House, who 'twas thought had been convey'd away by a Gentleman who pretended to court her.—This News was sufficient to alarm the guilty Soul of him 'twas told to, and not doubting but every thing was discover'd, had hasten'd to *Ferdinand* to apprize him of it—
' Without doubt, *said he*, my Lord, the
' whole Secret is betray'd, and I, and the
' People of this House must be inevitably ruin'd, as Abettors of the Fact, unless your
' In-

'Interest with the *Doge* is strong enough to
 'protect us.' 'My Interest with my Uncle,
 'reply'd the other very much perplexed, I fear will
 'be too weak even to obtain a Pardon for
 'myself in an Affair like this.——*Bernardo* is
 'a Senator, and highly esteem'd both by the
 'Court and Populace——I know not what
 'to think on it.'——He stood for a moment
 or two after he had spoke this in a pause, and
 that gave *Idalia*, (who, by the coming of *Flo-*
rez, and the Advertisement he brought, knew
 it was to his Deceit she ow'd her Ruin) liber-
 ty to vent some part of her just Rage in Cur-
 ses and Reproaches. Neither of them in that
 Confusion seem'd to take much notice of what
 she said; but *Don Ferdinand* starting from his
 musing, and catching up his Clothes, and
 putting them on as hastily as he could, 'Tis
 'now no time, said he, to answer idle Rail-
 'ing, we must prepare for our common Safe-
 'ty.' As soon as he had spoke these words,
 he call'd for the Woman of the House, who
 presently came up, frighted almost to death
 with the Account she had receiv'd from *Flo-*
rez, and ordered her to dress *Idalia* with all
 the expedition imaginable; bidding her not to
 be concern'd, for he had bethought him of a
 Way to retrieve all. But all that he, or she,
 or *Florez* could do, was not to any purpose to
 persuade *Idalia* to rise; she seem'd, in the midst
 of her Anguish, to exult, with hope of Ven-
 geance, and swore she would continue in the
 very Place and Posture she was in, and, by
 proclaiming her Wrongs, and the Authors of
 'em, put it past the power of all their Arti-
 fice to escape the Punishment they fear'd. But
 alas!

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alas! her Resolution stood her but in little stead on this Occasion; the imminent Danger they were in, made them dispense with Ceremony, and she was taken out of Bed by force, and her Clothes, in what manner they could, huddled on. As soon as she was made ready, he catch'd her in his Arms, and carry'd her down stairs, bidding *Florez* look that nothing was left in the Chamber, which might discover who had been there: The House that join'd to that in which they were, belong'd to a young Gentleman, whose Name was *Henriquez de Velago*, an intimate Friend and Companion of *Ferdinand's*. Thither did he carry the disconsolate *Idalia*, entreating him to be careful that her Despair acted nothing against her Life, and that he would conceal her from the View of all his Servants, and at Night convey her to *Padua*, to a Seat he knew he had in that City. *Henriquez* having faithfully promised to obey him in all these Injunctions, he left him, and return'd to *Florez* and the Landlady: the latter he bade be of good comfort, there could be no Proof against her, and all she had to do was to be resolute in her Denials; for which, he told her, he would not fail to recompense her. Having given this necessary Order, he went away with *Florez* at the Back-Door the very moment that *Bernardo*, and those he brought, were commanding the other to be opened. The Woman, according to Directions, immediately obey'd, and so well counterfeited a Surprise at the Demands they made, that a Person less interested than *Don Bernardo* would have believ'd her innocent; but the Letter was to him an Evidence

substantial: and tho' in searching all the Rooms, examining the Servants, and taking all the Care usual on such Occasions, there seem'd not the least ground to imagine she, or any other Persons, beside the Family, had been there; he was obliged to go away more *unsatisfy'd*, because he wanted Proof; but as much *assured* as before, that this was the fatal Place which had deprived him of his Daughter.

FERDINAND, accompany'd by *Florez*, went directly to his own Apartment, where having passed some time in consultation in what manner it was best to proceed, at last it was concluded that the latter should remain there conceal'd, till they should find out by what means the Discovery had been made; and it being the Custom of the former every Morning to attend the *Doge*, he new dressed him, and at the usual Hour went to the Palace, which he found crouded by a great number of the Nobility and Senators, who, he was inform'd by some of them, were summoned by the *Doge* on an Affair relating to *Don Bernardo*. It is easy to believe his Thoughts were not a little perplexed, to find the Affair had made so great a noise; but vailing his Confusion as much as possible, he mingled with the Company that were going into the Room where his Uncle expected to receive them. The Morning-Salutations were scarce over, when the unhappy *Bernardo* entered, and made his Complaint with so moving an Air, that few that heard him, but pity'd his Misfortune. The *Doge* entreated him to be of comfort, assured him

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him that nothing in the compass of his Power should be wanting for his Redress; and that if by any means the Person who had injur'd him could be detected, the Offender, tho' found in the nearest, and most dear, Relation of his own, should not be protected from the severest Punishment the Law or his Revenge requir'd. The mournful Father made his Compliment for these Assurances in as handsome a manner as his Grief would give him leave; and having finish'd it, proceeded to relate all the Circumstances he knew of his Misfortune, which was the finding of the Letters; one of which had so punctually nominated *that House* for the Place she was to come to: but that having been search'd, and nothing of proof to be made that she had been there, it was not impossible but some Person, to confound their Examination, might have writ it on purpose. All that remain'd was to endeavour to discover by whom these Letters were writ, for there was no Name to any of them, (*Idalia* having forbid it, that her Correspondence with *Florez* might not by any Accident be found out) *Bernardo* produced them to the View of the whole Assembly, and the *Doge* earnestly adjur'd all present, that if they could in the least guess by the Style, or Character, who was the Author, they would immediately declare it. But every one affirm'd himself entirely ignorant, and *Ferdinand* now hugg'd himself in a full Security that this first Brunt being past, nothing could hereafter prejudice him, or *Florez*, on the account of *Idalia*: But the Solemnity with which he had heard his Uncle protest to *Don Bernardo*, that if the Person who

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had

had wrong'd him could by any means be discover'd, the strictest Severity of Justice should be his Portion, made him extremely cautious in what manner he behav'd. He forbore, therefore, to visit *Idalia* while she was conceal'd at the House of Don *Henriquez*, nor would for some days after he knew she was carry'd to *Padua*, go there.

BUT while the Success of this Adventure afforded a good deal of satisfactory matter of Conversation to those who were the Contrivers of it whenever they were together, the miserable *Bernardo* pass'd his Hours in a Condition pityable by all but those who had occasion'd it: he refused to eat or drink, shut himself from all Society, and suffer'd not the Light of Heaven to enter at his mournful Windows. In vain his Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance endeavour'd to persuade him to assuage his Sorrows—in vain the *Religious* of all Orders sent their daily Remonstrances, how unlawful it was to give way to such immoderate Grief! He was not to be mov'd—he was not to be comforted—and it was look'd on as almost a Miracle, that *Age* so oppress'd sunk not beneath the Burden of an Anguish sufficient to have weigh'd down *Youth*.

BUT to return to *Idalia*—Never Man had a Task more difficult, than *Henriquez* found in executing the Charge Don *Ferdinand* had given him. That wretched Lady was so bent on Death, that there requir'd the utmost Caution to prevent the Mischief which her Fury threaten'd: a hundred times, in that one day she

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He remain'd in his House, had she attempted on her Life, and when he had put her into a *Gondula*, which he had order'd to be made ready for that purpose, he was obliged to hold her, the whole time of their little Voyage, in his Arms, or the River *Brent* had been her Grave. 'Oh Cruel! Barbarous Man!' said she, 'why will you deny me the only Relief for Miseries like mine?—But think not to disappoint me always—Not all the Powers of Heaven and Earth combined shall force me long to drag this Load of Infamy and Woe!—I cannot—will not live!'—With such like Speeches, which were still accompany'd with tearing of her Hair, her Garments, and sometimes her very Flesh, did she express the bitter Anguish of her Soul, whenever he attempted to divert her Desperation. But how dangerous is it for a Heart young and amorous to entertain Compassion for a Lovely Object! What a prevailing Force has Beauty in Distress! Not all her Distraction, nor the wild Horror which sat on her Features, could take from them their Power of Charming.—The Fire of Indignation which sparkled in her Eyes abated not the wonted Sweetness—the very Confusion of her Air had something graceful in it, and *Henriquez* too soon was sensible that in the Design of serving *Ferdinand* he had undertaken an Office fatal to his own Repose. He struggled, however, with all the force he was able, to withstand the first Emotions of his Passion, not only because of the Injustice such Sentiments would make him guilty of to a Friend who had entrusted him, but also that himself was under Obligations of Con-

Constancy to a Lady who had prefer'd him to the whole World.

BUT alas! what Tyes, what Obligations, what Engagements are sufficient to bind the roving Heart of faithless Man? Untasted Pleasures still are thought the sweetest: Donna *Laura* (for so was she call'd, the Memory of whose Charms this new Beauty was beginning to erase) had already been too bounteous of her Favours to make the almost sated *Henriquez* over-sollicitous of the Continuance of them; he had, however, more Gratitude than many of his Sex can boast, and, as I have already said, endeavour'd for some time very strenuously to repel the Assaults of any new Desires to her prejudice; and 'tis not altogether impossible (tho not exceeding probable, considering the Charms of *Idalia*, and the Inconstancy which is natural to Mankind) that his Efforts might not have been unsuccessful, had not herself contributed to her undoing.

NEVER Woman was of a more Haughty, Jealous, and Impatient Disposition, than this Lady, and having sometime before made *Henriquez* a Present of a little *Moorish* Page, with a design to to be a Spy on his Actions, was by him inform'd that his Master had order'd a *Gondula* to wait him about Sun-set at the River *Brent*, and that he had commanded his Servants not to discover to any Person after his Departure which way he was gone: this was sufficient to alarm her with an Apprehension that something must have occasion'd this Secrecy; and the rather, because she had sent twice that day to desire
to

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to speak with him, and he had both times excused himself from coming, pretending Indisposition. She immediately, as jealous Women do, imagin'd the worst, was certain in her own Mind that a new Mistress had engaged him from her, and that it could be with no other he intended to leave *Venice*. She presently suppos'd it must be to *Padua* he was going, and not able to linger in the Torments of Suspence, resolv'd to be there before him; and that no notice might be taken of her Design, would not command her own *Gondula*, tho she had a very fine one, to be prepared, but got into one of those common *Wherrys* which generally wait to carry ordinary Passengers. She had frequently been at the House which *Don Henriquez* had at *Padua*, and the Servants that were in it perfectly knew her, and were not at all surpriz'd to see her, especially when she told them that their Master would be there next Morning. But the Confusion with which *Henriquez* at his arrival beheld her there, may more easily be imagin'd than described; therefore I shall only say it was such as could be surmounted by nothing but the Indignation of *Lawra*, when by the sight of *Idalia* with him, she had so much reason to believe her Suspicions were too just: She flew on him with all the Reproaches that her Rage, and the Confirmation of her Jealousy, could suggest; to which he gave but little Answer, till after he had conducted his Lovely Charge to a Chamber, and appointed a Servant to watch and attend her. At his Return to the Room where he had left *Lawra*, he endeavour'd to allay the Fury she was in, by telling her

her part of the Truth: he assured her that it was not on his own account that he had been at the pains of bringing that Lady thither, but conceal'd the Name of the Person for whose sake he had done it; being of that opinion which most of his Sex have of the other, that there was but little Security for their Secrecy, and was sensible how dangerous for *Ferdinand* it would be, if by her Levity it should be revealed. But his evading to let her into the whole Affair, rendered her incapable of believing any part of it; all that he could say seem'd but so many Excuses, and was ineffectual to alleviate her Passion.—She loaded him with Curses and Upbraidings——swore never to see him more.——Nor could all his Entreaties prevail on her to continue a moment longer in his House; but taking advantage of the *Gondula* which had brought him and *Idalia*, left him with a Vow never to rest till she had meditated a Revenge suitable to his Perfidiousness.

WHEN once a Woman has disposed of every thing in her power to give, it must be Softness only, and fond Compliance with her Lover's Will, that can maintain her Empire o'er his Heart.——The Power which once this Lady had, was already shock'd by the newer, and more potent Charms of the incomparable *Idalia*; and the Violence of her impatient Jealousy bringing to his remembrance a thousand Faults in her Humour, which in the Noon of Passion's Sun were hid, but now, in the *Wane* of his Affections appear'd in their worst Colours, she began not only to appear dis-

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distasteful to his softer Sentiments, but also to seem justly so to those which Reason had the greatest share in inspiring. — He knew not however to what Extremes her Indignation might transport her, and to prevent what she might contrive, thought it the best way to remove *Idalia*. He had a little *Villa* at *Vicenza*, about a Day's Journey from *Padua*, in the Road to *Verona*, one of the most pleasantly situated Places in all *Italy*, having its Foundation on a Hill, which afforded a Prospect of the whole Country round for many Miles: the Sweetness of the Air, and the Variety of rural Diversions she might find there, he hoped might have an influence over her Melancholy, and in time wear off the Bitterness of those agonizing Reflections which at present she was so full of.

HE delay'd the Execution of this Design no longer than the next Day; and as nothing violent is ever of any long continuance, thro' his Persuasions, and the Measures he made use of to effect it, the desperate Emotions which had raged with so much Fury in the Soul of *Idalia*, began by little and little to abate; and the wonderful Respect, and prodigious Tenderness with which she found herself treated by this new Adorer, by degrees entirely reconciled her to Life: He observ'd it with Joy, and being desirous to discover more, one Day, as they were sitting together, he entreated her to command him something whereby he might testify the sincere Esteem and Admiration he professed to have for her. — He assured her there was nothing so difficult that he would

F. not

not undertake for her sake, and to sound her Inclinations, begg'd she would have confidence enough in him to acquaint him with what she would have done. — Do not, Madam, said he, consider yourself as under any Restraint, while at *Vicenza*: tho' nothing in the World can afford me a Joy adequate to that of gazing on you, yet if you are determined to return to your Father, myself shall conduct you to him, and endeavour to invent some Excuse which may shadow over the true Cause of your Absence — or if you can enough forgive the Faults of raging Passion, to yield to the Affections of *Don Ferdinand*, tho' to the eternal Ruin of my own ardent Wishes, at *Padua* you shall meet him: for doubtless he will soon be there to take you from me — or if there be any thing in this place so agreeable to you, as to make you willing to bless me with your Residence in it, here remain safe both from your Father's Power, and the Sollicitations of all you would avoid. This Offer appear'd so generous, that *Idalia* was infinitely charm'd with it; and, after a little pause, 'I am so much obliged, reply'd she, to your Honour and Good-Nature, since I have been here, that it is not without the utmost Confusion I reflect on my manner of treating you when I was first put in your power: as you had no hand in my Undoing, I ought to have reserved my Reproaches for those who alone are worthy of em. — And to the rest of your Obligations I see you are willing to add that of pardoning what my Madness uttered: But, continued she,

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She, with an Air wholly composed of Sweetness,
for this last Favour I know not with what
Words to thank you——there's something
in it beyond the reach of Gratitude——
and 'tis in my Acceptance only that I can
prove how truly I am touch'd with it.
To return to *Venice* I never can consent,
my Reputation blasted, and ruin'd by my
Father's hasty Zeal in publishing this Ad-
venture, I should become the Jest of every
sawcy Girl that envy'd me before.——My
Spirit could not bear it.——No, first I'd
turn a wretched Wanderer thro' the piteous
World——a Grave would now be prefera-
ble to my Father's House.——But as to
Ferdinand——the Villain!——the Mon-
ster that has undone me!——Hell, Hell,
is not so dreadful as the Thoughts of seeing
him again!——Then, Madam, try'd
the transported *Henriquez*, interrupting her, I
may hope you will continue here? For
some time, resumed *she*, if you grow not wea-
ry of so troublesome a Guest: I'll stay till
I have disposed of myself either in a Mo-
nastery, or some other Place. 'Tis easy
to suppose with how much Rapture the ena-
mour'd *Henriquez* heard her speak these words:
There pass'd between 'em several Protestations
of Love and Adoration on the one side, and
Esteem and Gratitude on the other; and at
last entering into a Discourse what Method was
most proper to make use of for the preserving
her in that Liberty she desired, they both
thought it best that he should leave her there,
and return to *Padua* before the coming of *Fer-*
dinand, and missing him, should discover he

had carry'd her to any other Place; and that at their first meeting, he should counterfeit the greatest Concern imaginable for not having been able to discharge the Trust reposed in him; and withal, dress up a Story of her having made her escape by Night from his House. This being concluded on, he took Horse immediately for *Padua*, where had happened a Disturbance he little expected to hear of.

THE malicious *Laura*, doubly disappointed in her Love and Pride, meditated nothing but Revenge; and tho she had never seen *Idalia* before she met her at *Henriquez's* House, nor could be certain she was that Lady whose Elopement had made so great a noise at *Venice*, yet it came into her head to report it; not doubting but *Don Bernardo* would take such measures to assure himself, as would infallibly expose her Rival. She thought that if it were really *Idalia*, as there was nothing improbable but it should, the Father's just Indignation would not only be the Ruin of his Passion, by depriving him of her sight for ever, but also the eternal Destruction of his Fortune, and perhaps his Life, for there was not any thing too violent for her Rage to wish inflicted on him: and that if it should happen to be any other Woman, the Discovery who she was, and the Opportunity it would give of blasting her Reputation, would be some little Satisfaction, for the Loss of *Henriquez*. With this View she took a Pen, and employ'd it to *Don Bernardo*, in the manner following.

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To Don BERNARDO.

TO receive an Injury, yet to be, by our Ignorance of the Person who offers it, deprived of the means either of Vengeance or Redress, I look upon as a Vexation almost equal to what the Misfortune itself occasions: and have too great a Sense of what a Father's Heart must feel in a Disappointment like yours, to withhold a Secret which may afford some sort of a Satisfaction to you.

THE fair Idalia, your unhappy Daughter, either too fatally ensnared by the Insinuations of the most Vicious and Perfidious of his Sex Don Henriquez de Velago, or betray'd to his Power by some Artifice yet more base, was lodg'd in his House, perhaps in his Bed, when you were vainly searching for her in another place: But he, with reason, fearing the amorous Theft unsafe to be long detain'd at Venice, has since carry'd her to Padua, where he now revels in her Ruin, and triumphs in Security.

'TWOULD be but impertinent to instruct you what to do; your own Wisdom and Paternal Care will need no Admonitions with what expedition you should haste, I will not say to save, but to revenge a Daughter: Therefore will trouble you no farther than to entreat your pardon for not setting any Name to this Advertisement, which is design'd a friendly one, from

Your unknown Humble Servant.

A Reader of the most ordinary Capacity will easily imagine this Letter had the effect on Don *Bernardo* it was writ for; he forgot his Age, and the Indisposition his late Griefs had thrown him in; he defer'd going to *Padua* no longer a time than the Necessity of getting those People who were to accompany him requir'd: But this unhappy Gentleman had to his other Calamity this added, of being twice as he believ'd at the point of detecting the Author of his Misfortune, and as often finding his Expectations disappointed; for the Servants of *Henriquez* were all of them too faithful to utter the least Syllable of what they knew; and *Bernardo* doubted not but he had been a second time abused, and presently imagin'd the Person who had writ the other Letter to amuse his Search, had also been the Contriver of this.

BUT tho' there was nothing of *Idallia* to be heard, this Adventure was the Occasion of bringing to light another Secret; which afterward being blaz'd abroad, was matter enough of discourse for the whole Town for a long time. Having left *Henriquez's* House with a design never to trouble any other without some more evident Demonstration that they were not impos'd on, as they pass'd by a Vineyard adjoining to it, they happen'd to see a Country Fellow pruning the Vines; it came into the head of some one of those who were with *Bernardo*, to inquire of him if he had not seen a Lady at his Master's. The Rustick's Simplicity gave hopes he would not deny the Truth,

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Truth, or if he did, it would be in such a manner, as they might easily discover it; and indeed had a Secret been in his Keeping, there was little probability it would long continue so. He presently told them, a Lady had been there some few days before; and, said he, 'tis rumour'd here at *Padua*, that she is Don *Henriquez's* Mistress. Some say that he is to marry her, but by the Mass I believe nothing of it; for chancing to be in the Grove behind the House, who did I see come in but these two kissing and toying; they did not think I took any notice. I say no more; but if even he is her Husband, I have lost my aim—that's all.—These Words, which could not be imagin'd to be utter'd with any other design than what the manner of them express'd, the Pleasure some People, especially of his degree, take in speaking all they know, made poor *Bernardo* ready to sink into the Earth: he was now sure it was *Idalia* that the Fellow meant, and the Horror which seiz'd his before half-broken Heart, was now so great to hear this seeming Confirmation of the Dishonour of his Family and Ruin of his Child, that he had neither Voice or Spirit to ask more. But the others, being less interested in what they heard, had Presence of Mind enough to put many other Questions to him; among the rest, what sort of a Woman she was who had been so familiar with Don *Henriquez*, if she was tall or short, black or fair, of what Age she appear'd to be, and if he had ever seen her before, or knew of her having been at his Master's House any other time than that he spoke of in the Grove: to most of these Interrogatories

rogatories the Fellow made such Replies as gave no Certainty whether it was the Lady they were in search of or not ; till to the last, that of how often she had been there, he told them it had been her constant Custom to come and tarry two or three Nights at a time, whenever *Henriquet* was at *Padua*, as long as he had been employ'd in working there, which had been above two Years. This Account did no way agree with a Belief that it could be *Idalia*, who had never been one Night absent from her Father's House till that fatal one, in which he had begun his Search : which some of 'em saying, and chancing to mention her Name——' Alas ! cry'd the Countryman, you are mistaken, Gentlemen, I do not know any thing of the Woman you speak of ; she I mean, is call'd *Donna Laura de Savila*, Widow of *Don Jaquez de Savila*, I was once a Servant of her Husband's, and am as well acquainted with her Face as my own.' There was not a Person in this Company but knew this Lady, but there was one among 'em whom these Words did more particularly influence ; he had for a long time had a Passion for her, and finding all the Endeavours he could make use of were in vain to engage any other Return than Disdain, his slighted Tenderness (as 'tis common enough, especially among the *Italians*) was now converted to as violent an Aversion, and nothing on earth could have been so agreeable to the Sentiments with which he now consider'd her, as this Account, which gave him so fair an opportunity of affronting, and exposing her ; which at their Return to *Venice* he took care to

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to do, with such a witty Inveteracy, that the once haughty, gay, admired *Laura* saw herself in a little time the Ridicule of all who knew her; and not able to endure the Disrespect of those Reflections, which even her very Presence did not silence, and as little in a Capacity of revenging it, her Charms being almost past the Bloom, and her Wealth, by former Extravagancies very near exhausted, out of humour with the World, and detesting all Mankind, she retired to a Relation's House which few resorted to, who had any knowledge of her, and indulg'd her Discontent that a Misfortune she design'd another, had so justly fallen on herself.

BUT this happen'd not till after she had seen one part of her indignant Wish fulfill'd, the Death of *Henriquez*; which tho not brought about by any Contrivance of her own, she look'd upon as inflicted on him by the Justice of Providence for his Ingratitude and Perfidiousness to her.

AT his Return to *Padua*, 'tis hard to say whether his Surprize to hear his House had been search'd, or the Joy he conceiv'd that the Danger of it was so well over, had the greatest share in his Soul: but his Contentment was only of a short continuance, designing to go immediately to *Venice*, thinking it the more effectual way to take off all Apprehensions of *Don Ferdinand's* ever expecting to find *Idalia* with him, to go to him with the Story he had form'd of her Escape, than to wait his coming to seek her at *Padua*. He was

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just

just preparing to set out, when he was told that Don *Ferdinand* was alighted at the Gate: he went to receive him with the Familiarity which the long Friendship that had been between them render'd the most obliging; but before he had time to mention what he intended about *Idalia*, the other was beginning to make him a thousand Acknowledgments for the Care he had taken in preserving her for him. 'To what an infinite degree, dear Friend, *said he*, am I obliged to you for the trouble you have had in securing for me a Happiness I must but for your Goodness have been utterly deprived of! All that I can say, will be too little to express the Gratitude I feel—but be assured the Favour shall never die in my Remembrance; each moment that blesses me with my lov'd *Idalia's* sight, will also remind me it is to you I am indebted for the Rapture.'——'Alas! my Lord, (*interrupted Henriquez, a little confounded at receiving Thanks for that which he was conscious to himself he was far from deserving*) I wish to Heaven it had been in my power to have any way contributed to your Satisfaction, but all my Endeavours were in vain'——'I know what you would say, (*cry'd Ferdinand, not suffering him to proceed*) I know the Inexorable Fair has been deaf to all the Arguments you could urge in favour of my Passion; but no matter, Time and Assiduity may work upon her, and my continued Tenderness engage her yielding to that Joy the Violence of my burning Passion has yet but by Force obtained.——But haste, *pursued he*, my dear *Henriquez*! haste and conduct

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‘conduct me to her—my throbbing Heart
‘beats high with raging Love.—This tedious
‘Absence which the Fear of being suspected,
‘and by that means losing her for ever, could
‘only have occasion’d, has made me almost
‘wild with fierce Impatience—I burn, I bleed,
‘I die to see her.’——‘Can it be possible,
‘*resumed Henriquez coldly*, this mighty Long-
‘ing, this ardent Wishing for one whose
‘Charms already you have rifled? Can the
‘Desire of Beauty enjoy’d and known, afford
‘such eager Transports?’——‘’Tis strange
‘indeed, *reply’d Ferdinand*, but would not
‘seem so, could you have any Notion how
‘much beyond her Sex *Idalia* is—how charm-
‘ing even in the midst of Rage and Grief—
‘Her very Frowns have more Attractions in
‘’em than the most melting Softness of any
‘other Woman!’ ‘I am sorry for it, *said*
‘*Henriquez*, and if Wishes would avail, could
‘willingly lose part of my Blood, she seem’d
‘less worthy your Esteem.’

THE Surprise of the enamour’d *Ferdinand*
at these words can hardly be represented,
much less the Rage with which he listen’d to
that Story the other had prepared to deceive
him into a Belief of her Flight. There is no-
thing in the world more difficult than to con-
ceal *Love* from him who is a *Lover*, but much
more so, when the same Object enflames them
both: Besides, there are so many little Hes-
itations in the telling an Untruth, especially
with those who do not usually practise it, that
a nice Observer may easily discern the dif-
ference. Don *Ferdinand* was too passionate an

Admirer of *Idalia's* Perfections, not to believe it highly probable another might think of her as he did ; and, by the Force he had made use of to gratify his Desires, one might know he was not so great a Bigot to the Rules of Honour, as to imagine they had power to restrain Appetite : He forbore, however, to interrupt the other while he was speaking ; but as soon as he found him silent, he broke out into all the Exclamations the Falshood he believed himself treated with deserv'd. *Henriquez* willing to preserve his Friendship, but resolute not to forgo *Idalia*, made a thousand Imprecations to aver the Truth of what he said, but to no purpose ; and had it really happen'd as *Henriquez* pretended, 'tis probable he would have found it a hard matter to have gain'd credit from this impatient Lover : Fierce and tempestuous in his Nature when any thing displeased him, he let him know he saw through, and disdain'd, the feeble Arts with which he went about to impose on him, and bid him once for all bring forth *Idalia*, or answer his Demand with his Sword. *Henriquez* would very fain have evaded either, but finding himself press'd past refusal, and absolutely bent not to comply with the former, he was obliged to do so to the latter, or prove himself a Coward : the Place agreed on for the Decision of this fatal Controversy, was a Field adjoining to *Henriquez's* House ; and *Ferdinand* going there before, to avoid Suspicion of their Quarrel, the other promised to follow him immediately.

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IT was not without the greatest Concern that *Henriquez* found himself involv'd in this unhappy Necessity, either to be miserable for ever in the Loss of *Idalia*, or become the Enemy of a Person whom he had long consider'd as the most intimate of his Friends, and one in whose power it was to do him many ill Offices with the *Doge*; on whom he, as well as the other, had a Dépendance. But what Considerations are of force against Love? After two or three moments Reflection, he sat him down, and writ a Letter, which he gave to a trusty Servant, ordering him to carry it with all Secrecy and Speed to his *Villa* at *Vicenza*, and deliver it to *Idalia*; and then immediately went to the Field, where the enraged *Ferdinand* impatiently expected him.

A few words, much to the same purpose as those they had entertain'd each other with in the House, having pass'd between them, the new-made Enemies drew their Swords, and running against each other with greater Force than Art, each more aiming to reach his Rival's Life than defend his own, both had their Wish; the unfortunate *Henriquez* lost his at the first Push, and his Antagonist having receiv'd his Death's Wound, though yet ignorant of it, seeing him fall, was about to make his Escape, when, on a sudden, he found himself unable, and that he should soon lose both the Triumph of having overcome his Foe, and the Danger of the Punishment the Law inflicts on Duelists. He surviv'd not the other above half an hour, as the Chirurgeons, who afterwards examin'd

amin'd the Bodies, imagin'd; and the untimely Death of these two unhappy Gentlemen gave *Idalia* the first Proof, that her Beauty, like a fatal Comet, was destructive to all on whom it had any Influence, and seem'd given her in so extraordinary a Proportion, only to make her Misfortunes more conspicuous.

S H E, who little dreamt of this fatal Catastrophe, was, in the mean time, entertaining herself with *Ideas* of a far different nature: had she been less conscious of her own Excellencies, she could not have been blind to the Admiration which every Word and Action testify'd Don *Henriquez* had of them. She saw plainly that he lov'd her, and lov'd her with a Passion which was not to be accounted less violent, because it was more respectful than that of Don *Ferdinand*; her Pride however would certainly have prefer'd the latter, because of his superiour Quality, could she have entertain'd the least hope, that after what had happened he would marry her. But young and vain as she was, she flatter'd not herself with such a hope; and for that reason, as well as for the Violence he had used her with, he was the Object of her extremest Detestation: but as for *Henriquez*, she began to consider, that if his Designs were honourable, as he had never given her any Cause to suspect they were not, she might, by becoming his Wife, take off the Odium, which, by her being gone from her Father's House, had been cast on her Reputation. And this appear'd so laudable a Wish, that she thought it would be an Indiscretion greater than any she had yet been

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been guilty of, should she refuse it. She thought of nothing therefore but the manner in which she should consent, which she doubted not but he would ask at his next Coming to *Vicenza*.

I doubt not but the Reader will be pretty much surpriz'd to find she could so easily be brought from one Extreme to another, and that she who but a few days before was all Despair and Rage, was already grown so temperate and calm; but there was a happy Instability in this Lady's Nature, which prevented her from regretting any thing for a long time together, and it was this Disposition which carry'd her thro a Sea of innumerable Troubles, each of which would have been sufficient to have overwhelm'd another Woman. The Treachery with which her Confidence had been abus'd by *Florez*, the irreparable Injury her Virtue had received from the brutal Passion of *Ferdinand*, and the Grief which she was sensible the Loss of her was to her afflicted *Father*, were now no more remembered, or consider'd only as Vexations which the gaining a Husband so meritorious as *Henriquez* would amply compensate.

IN Contemplations therefore, not displeasing, did she pass her Time; till about the third Day after the Departure of *Henriquez*, one of the Servants whom he had left to attend her, came running hastily into the Room where she was, and told her, That Don *Myrta*no, Brother to his Master, desir'd to speak with her. She cou'd have no Apprehensions of the true Reason of this Visit, and imagining only that

that some Accident having detain'd *Henriquez* longer than he design'd, he had commission'd him to tell her of it, went to receive him without any Concern, or Boding of the Miseries, which this fatal Interview drew on her.

AFTER the first Civilities were over, 'Madam! said he, I have a Letter for you, which you ought to have receiv'd before; but the same unhappy Accident which delay'd the bringing it, has also been the Cause of my breaking it open; a Rudeness, I confess, which nothing but the Occasion could excuse.' In speaking these Words, he deliver'd a Paper to her, which was the same that *Henriquez* had writ to her the moment before he fought with *Ferdinand*. The melancholy Air of his Deportment, and the Sighs which accompany'd his Expressions, gave her sufficient Reason to believe there was something extraordinary to be told her; but she suspended the lesser Curiosity, to satisfy the greater, of knowing what this Letter contain'd; which opening hastily, she found in it these Lines:

To the Incomparable IDALIA.

IF any thing were wanting to make my Charmer sensible of the Wonders of her Power, and the Effects it has wrought on me; what I am now about to acquaint her, with would be a Proof.

DON Ferdinand either suspecting the Artifice which my Passion inspir'd me to deceive him with, or resenting the little Care I seem'd to have of the
Trust

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Trust he repos'd in me, demands my Life for the Expiation of my Crime. I go this Moment to answer the Call of his Revenge. I cannot blame him; the Man who aims at so inestimable a Treasure as Your Love, should, for that Blessing, quit all meaner Considerations: and in that View only it is that I shall dare to maintain the Falsity I have told him, tho' at the Expence of my last Drop of Blood. But, as I am ignorant how, in this fatal Contest, Fate may deal with me, I snatch this Opportunity of pouring out a Million of soft, tender Wishes, while I give you this Assurance, that whatever is decreed for my Body, you wholly govern my Immortal Part; the Sword of Ferdinand may pierce my Heart, but not erase the bright Idea that my Soul is full of: when I am Ashes, the Passion you have inspir'd will have a Being; and Living, or Dying, I shall still continue

Your Adorer,

Henriquez De Velago,

IDALIA was too much interested in the Life of Don Henriquez not to be impatient to hear the Issue of this Quarrel mention'd in the Letter; which being inform'd of by his Brother, she swoon'd away, o'ercome with Grief and Wonder. Don Myrtano was not idle in applying proper Means for her Recovery, which when he had effected, he began to entertain her in a very different manner than what she cou'd have expected from so near a Relation to the Man who owed his Death to her malevolent Beauty; he was all Complaisance, all Gallantry, and seem'd so little astonish'd at what his Brother

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had

had done, that he assur'd her he should think a Death so caus'd more glorious than the longest Life, which gave not a Proof of being sensible of her Charms : This was indeed the Way to dissipate her Sorrows, but as she wanted not Wit nor Discernment, tho' her Vanity too often blinded her Judgment, she could not help thinking it a little odd that he should come there to visit her, and bring a Letter which he confessed he had taken the Liberty to open ; and letting fall some Words which testify'd as much, he gave her to understand his Reasons for it, in this manner. ' I see, Ma-
 ' dam, said he, that you are not more surpriz'd
 ' at the Contents of this Letter, than that I am
 ' the Bearer of it ; and because I should think
 ' it a Sin unpardonable to Heaven to oppose
 ' the Will of its most perfect Resemblance, the
 ' Divine *Idalia*, I shall endeavour to satisfy her,
 ' as far as is in my power, of every Particular
 ' of this unfortunate Adventure. Happening
 ' to be walking with your Father *Don Bernardo*
 ' on the Parade the very Morning that he re-
 ' ceived a Letter from an unknown Hand,
 ' which gave him an Account of my Brother
 ' being blest with your Society, he desir'd me
 ' with the most earnest Conjurations to inform
 ' him what I knew of the Affair ; to which I
 ' answer'd, as well I might, that I was so far
 ' from being let into any such Secret, that I
 ' verily believ'd it a Falsity ; and when he spoke
 ' of coming to *Padua* in search of you, I offer'd
 ' to accompany him, which I had done if not
 ' prevented by some Business which I could
 ' not put off. At his Return he sent for me,
 ' and seem'd concern'd that he had been guilty
 ' of

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‘ of wronging my Brother, and entreated me
‘ to make his Apology when next I saw him,
‘ which I told him would be in a short Time,
‘ and accordingly took Horse for *Padua* im-
‘ mediately. I alighted there at the very moment
‘ that the Bodies of the two unhappy Rivals
‘ were brought in: The Consternation I was
‘ in, to see this dreadful Issue of a Friendship
‘ which promis’d a far different Consequence,
‘ can hardly be express’d: I stood for some
‘ time without the Power of Speech or Motion,
‘ and perhaps had not recover’d myself so soon,
‘ if a Servant whom I knew to be the most fa-
‘ vour’d one my Brother kept, had not rous’d
‘ me from my Lethargy of Thought, by giving
‘ me a Paper, which he told me was writ by
‘ his Master, and put into his Hand, with a
‘ strict Charge to be deliver’d to a Lady at
‘ *Vicenza*. I was just about to carry it, *said he*,
‘ but am glad I made no greater haste, since
‘ the Contents may possibly inform you the
‘ Reasons of this fatal Quarrel. In that per-
‘ plexity of Mind, I lost Decorum, and break-
‘ ing the Seal, soon found the Fellow’s Con-
‘ jecture but too true,—that it was to *Love* I
‘ owed the Misfortune of my Brother’s Death:
‘ Wonder not then, adorable *Idalia*! (*continu’d*
‘ *he, soft’ning his Voice*) that I was fir’d with
‘ Impatience to behold a Beauty, whose
‘ Charms had given such a Proof of their pro-
‘ digious Influence.—I come (*cry’d he, growing*
‘ *more tender*) to satisfy a Curiosity which, I
‘ fear, will cost me dear.’ There was some-
‘ thing so very graceful and engaging, in the Air
‘ and Address of this young Gentleman, that it
‘ was almost impossible to see or hear him, with-

out confessing a Sensibility of Perfections which very few, if any, cou'd equal. *Idalia*, who had a Soul too capable of soft Impressions, full of warm Desires, and tender Languishments, tho' yet unfix'd, gaz'd on him with a Pleasure which as yet she knew not the Meaning of.—That Life and Gayety which once had made her relish the Conversation of *Florez*—that noble Mein and elegant Behaviour which had engag'd her Attention to the first Vows of *Ferdinand*—and that submissive Tendernefs which pleas'd her in the Addresses of *Henriquez*, and a thousand other different, nameless Graces, which seem'd united in the lovely *Myrtano*, inspir'd her, at the first Sight of him, with a Passion which she had neither Strength to repel, nor Artifice to conceal.—She now found in good Earnest what it was to love, and felt in reality those Emotions which before she but fancy'd to have done. He who was perfectly acquainted with the Sex, and no Stranger to the Charms he had for 'em, immediately read it in her Eyes, and resolv'd to make his Advantage of it, in favour of those Desires, which few that saw *Idalia* but were possess'd with.

HE staid not long at the *Villa*, after having entreated her to remain there his Guest, as she had been his Brother's, and to command every thing in it with the same Freedom as she wou'd do at *Don Bernardo's*; the necessary Preparations for the Funeral of *Henriquez*, whose Heir he was, obliging him to return to *Padua* with all expedition: but the short Time he had been there, was sufficient to inspire the unhappy

Idalia

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Idalia with such Sentiments as severely reveng'd the Destruction of his Brother.

THE Infancy of Love is generally the most pleasing Part of it, when new Desires play round the innocent Heart, and gentle Thrillings warm the throbbing Veins, the tender Passion by swift but unperceiv'd degrees stealing thro' all the Seats of Life, affords only gay Wishes, pleasing Dreams, and rapturous Images of Joys to come ; but in another manner did it enter the Soul of this unquiet Fair—She no sooner found herself alone, than giving way to her impatient Passion, a thousand widely different Thoughts, all wild and stormy as a troubled Sea, overwhelmed Reflection, and made Reason giddy—She was presently sensible that she lov'd, and lov'd to that prodigious height, that the least Appearance of an Obstacle to what she wish'd, was worse than Death ; her ruin'd Honour, and her blacken'd Fame seem'd now Misfortunes more terrible by far than ever they had done before. ' Oh 'tis impossible (*cry'd she to herself*) that ' *Myrtano* the lovely, the accomplish'd *Myrtano*, ' can ever think the undone *Idalia* an Object ' worthy of his serious Affections.—No, 'twas ' all Gallantry—all unmeaning Flattery which ' dictated the tender Words he spoke.—His ' Heart despises the Indiscretion of my Con- ' duct.—Pity is the most tender Sentiment he ' can regard me with,—and oh ! how distant is ' that from what I would inspire !' A Stream of Tears succeeded these Expressions ; but this Passion having a little vented itself, the natural Vanity of her Disposition return'd to give her
Consola-

54 IDALIA: or,

Consolation ; and in this Humour she would say, ‘ Yet why should I despair,—I am perhaps
 ‘ the only Person that judges with so much
 ‘ Severity of my Actions. *Henriquez* found enough in me to counterballance all that my
 ‘ Mismanagement has brought upon me, and
 ‘ why may I not hope his Brother may be of
 ‘ his Opinion ? — My Eyes are still the same,
 ‘ and every Charm which us’d to attract, maintains its Lustre with unfading Brightness.—
 ‘ The Man to whom I ow’d my Shame, has
 ‘ with his Life repair’d the Injury he did me,
 ‘ —nor is my Birth unworthy of *Myrtano*.’
 With such kind of Sentiments would she awhile beguile Despair ; but then the excessive Eagerness with which she wish’d to appear amiable in the Eyes of this Charmer of her Soul, suggested another Difficulty which she knew not how to get over.— ‘ Fool that I am, (*resumed she*) and
 ‘ too liable to entertain the vain Delusions of
 ‘ fictitious Hope.—’Tis not in Nature—’tis
 ‘ not in Reason, to expect the Man whose
 ‘ Brother I have kill’d, should love me.—The
 ‘ noble *Henriquez*, but for me, might have liv’d
 ‘ long and happily—for my curs’d sake he dy’d,
 ‘ and *Myrtano* is bound to hate me—should
 ‘ he forgive it, the Ghost of that unhappy
 ‘ Youth, would rise to blast us in the midst of
 ‘ Rapture—O Torture ! Horror ! Hell ! —it
 ‘ cannot—must not be—both Heaven and Earth
 ‘ forbid it—*Henriquez* cannot be recall’d, and
 ‘ *Myrtano* must not love.’

IN Agonies not to be express’d, not to be conceived but by the Heart that felt ’em, did this half-distracted Lady pass the Night after the

The Unfortunate Mistress. 55

the departure of *Myrtano* ; but the Morning brought her a Comforter beyond her Hopes. She was scarce risen from the Bed, which the Confusion of her Thoughts had made most restless, when she received a Letter, which opening with a mixture of Delight and Pain, as believing it came from him who now had the sole Power of bestowing either, she read these Lines :

To the Never-enough-Admir'd

IDALIA.

IT is not the bleeding Body of my only Brother yet uninterr'd, it is not the Apprehensions how, at so unfit a Season, you may condemn my rash Proceeding, can deter me from making a Declaration as suitable to your Beauty, as it is the contrary to my present Circumstance. But you were created only to work Wonders, and in the midst of Death and Horror disclose an opening Heaven, whose Brightness will suffer no other Ideas but itself to appear in the Remembrance.

THE Curiosity which yesterday brought me to Vicenza, has involv'd me in a Passion which must render me either the most blest, or the most wretched of Mankind. Who loves Idalia can have no Medium in his Fate ; what then must be the Terrors of Suspence in an Affair on which depends far more than Life ? Ease them, I conjure you, most adorable Idalia ! and either send me to the
Grave

56 IDALIA: or,

Grave with my unhappy Brother, or permit me to live in the felicitous Hope of being one day

Yours,

Myrtano de Velago,

P. S. *Whether you pardon or condemn the Presumption of this, let a Line inform me: if the former, expect me to return Thanks at your feet, as soon as the Obsequies of my Brother are perform'd; if the latter, to hear I am no more.*

WITH what Transports of unbounded Joy she read these Words, let those be judge who love like her: a thousand, thousand, times she kiss'd the dear, the welcome, Mandate; then put it to her Heart, repeating to herself the ravishing Contents—then snatch'd it out again, as loth to lose the sight of what had given her so infinite a Satisfaction, that scarce the Author of it, had he been present, could have added to it; the Extasy so fill'd her Soul, that she thought not of answering it, till a Servant inform'd her the Messenger, who brought it, waited to be dispatch'd. He shall not long, (*cry'd she, starting as it were from some delightful Dream*) and immediately running to a Table whereon stood a Standish, made him this Reply:

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To Don MYRTANO.

IN what manner can a Person so much obliged received an Overture of Love, without appearing guilty either of an Indecorum to herself, or Ingratitude to you? If I accept too readily of the Heart you offer, how shall I answer it to the Modesty of my Sex? And if I reject it, what way is left for me to repay the many Favours I am indebted for?—Severe Necessity! that whichsoever Path I tread, it leads to Condemnation——yet such is the Cruelty of my Fate. I therefore will chuse neither, but remain unbyass'd till Time, and a more perfect Acquaintance with your Humour, shall inform me what will best become Bernardo's Daughter

Idalia,

P. S. While I am a welcome Guest at Vicenza, I shall expect you to tell me so, as frequently as you can,

IT was with all the difficulty in the world she restrain'd herself from writing with more Tenderness, and when she read over what she was about to send, it appear'd so cold, and so far unlike the sincere Dictates of her Wishes, that she could not forbear adding a Postscript, for fear he should imagine her, indeed, altogether insensible of his Merit, and give over the hopeless Prosecution: nor was she reconciled to what she had done, till the next Morning, much about the same Hour

I

she

she had received the former, she was agreeably disturb'd from her Sleep by a second Billet, the Contents of which were these:

To the Adorable IDALIA.

THE Sight of your dear Hand gave a Joy too exquisite to be allay'd, even by the cold Reluctance with which you seem to treat a Passion the sincerest that ever Man profess'd or Woman welcom'd.——Methinks there should need no more to convince you of the Power of your triumphant Charms, than two such Victims as Ferdinand and Henriquez; and whenever you doubt my Truth, it cannot be that you call in question your own Beauty, but my Incapacity of distinguishing it.—But Time (as you are pleased to say) as it will convince you, so I hope will also move you to compassionate what is felt by

Your most Faithful Slave,

Myrtano de Velago.

P. S. The Body of the unfortunate Henriquez is this Night to be repositied in the Tomb of his Ancestors, and I hope to-morrow's Evening will bring me to Vicenza.——Prepare, if possible, to receive me with a Smile, lest I envy the Condition of him I leave behind me, and regret a Life made miserable by your Displeasure.

THERE was not abundance of occasion for this Pressure in the Postscript; the enamour'd

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mour'd *Idalia* would have found it a difficult task to have dress'd her Face in Frowns whenever he appear'd, had she never so much endeavour'd it; and she was so much an Enemy to disguising her Sentiments, that he might easily read them in the Answer which she return'd. It was in this manner.

To DON MYRTANO.

IF I were not unwilling to harbour a Thought so entirely disagreeable to my own Desires, I should imagine there was more of Raillery than Sincerity in the Declaration your first Letter made me. I am not so little conscious of my own Demerits, as to believe myself capable of inspiring a Passion such as you describe—but I shall make allowances for that. I am sensible you Men of Wit know how to magnify—and if I have not the better opinion of the small share of Beauty I am mistress of, I shall most certainly of your Elegance in raising an Idea so infinitely beyond what it is in reality.——All I wish is, that in good earnest you may talk yourself into an Imposition on your Judgment, and never see more than now you seem to do, the Faults of

Idalia.

P. S. I shall impatiently expect you to-morrow at *Vicenza*, and shall take care not to wear a Countenance too melancholy, lest it should remind you (more than will be for my advantage) of our common Loss in the Generous *Henriquez*.——Till then—Adieu.

IN Contemplations much the same as she had entertain'd herself with the Night before, did she pass this. The ensuing Day slid on insensibly, while she was employ'd in studying *Airs*, and practising in her Glass new Graces, to make the already charm'd *Myrtano* more enflamed. At length he came, and whether the extraordinary Desire each had to please, or that (as most People at some times look more amiable than at others) that day they chanced to do so; but the before too potent Charms of both, seem'd improv'd at this second View. The sparkling Eyes of *Myrtano*, which before shone with Amazement, at the uncommon Beauties they beheld in *Idalia's*, had now a tender Languor—a swimming Extacy—a soft, beseeching, nameless, Loveliness, mix'd with their Lustre, and spake, without the help of Words, the Wishes of his Soul. The Mourning Dress he had on, set off to vast advantage the Delicacy of his Complexion, which was of so unmatched a Whiteness, that there required all that Majesty, and Loftiness of Mien, which in his whole Deportment show'd itself, to keep him from Effeminacy: and, indeed, never did Nature unite such contrary Perfections with so engaging a Harmony as in his Composition. A distant View show'd him all *Hero*, adorn'd with every manly Martial Grace, and inspired Awe in the admiring Gazer; but his near Approach dissolv'd in softning Languishments the Soul, and spoke him form'd for all the Joys of Love. Thus, but far more enchanting than Description can have power to represent him, did he appear

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appear to the transported *Idalia* ; but that the Reader may have some little Notion of his Charms, take the Idea of 'em set down by her who best knew how to paint them.

The Character of MYRTANO ;

Writ by *IDALIA*,

And found afterwards in her Closet.

B Right ! Lovely ! Graceful ! are all Words below
What to Myrtano's Character we owe :
Divinely Glorious ! Godlike ! speaks but Part,
He yet has Charms which nearer touch the Heart :
These, awful Wonder, and our Homage claim,
But there's a Sweetness Language cannot name,
A Soul-Enchanting Softness (far above
The reach of Thought, unknowing him, to prove)
Dwells in his Air, amidst his Glories plays,
And tempers, not diminishes the Blaze.

HERE Fancy stoops to court the Aid of Sense,
Unable to conceive such Excellence !
Imagination may a Form create,
Correctly Lovely, and supremely Great ;
But Oh ! how mean would that Idea be,
To what, indeed, is to be found in Thee !
Joy-mingled Wonder kindles at thy sight,
And clothes our Admiration with Delight !

AS

*AS Tapers languish at th' Approach of Day,
 And by degrees melt slow their Shine away ;
 A while they glimmer with contracted Spires,
 Trembling, unable to relax their Fires :
 But when the Sun's broad Eye is open'd wide,
 And Beams, thick flashing, shoot on every side,
 No more their emulative Force they try,
 But quite o'erwhelm'd with Radiance sink, and die ;
 So those pale Lights whose Glare late shar'd our
 Praise,
 Are wholly lost in thy Almighty Blaze.
 Eras'd and blotted from the Book of Fame,
 Her thousand Tongues swell with thy charming Name:
 No other Sound now strikes our ravish'd Ears !
 No other Form in our glad View appears !
 So fully o'er the Soul thy Influence reigns,
 That not one Rebel Thought thy Sway disdains.*

HAD the Lover of *Idalia* been as poetical-
 ly inclined, 'tis possible we might have had a
 better Description of her transmitted to Poste-
 rity, than I am able to gather from the im-
 perfect Accounts I received from those who
 gave me the History of her Life : but since
 that has not been done, every body is at liber-
 ty to form an *Idea* of what appears most plea-
 sing to them ; for that she was one of the
 most Lovely of her Sex, is evident from that
 prodigious Power of Charming which gain'd
 her almost as many Admirers, as she had Eyes
 to gaze upon her.

BUT

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BUT to return to her Conversation with *Myrtano*;—It was such as was agreeable to their Characters, all Wit, all Elegance, all Tendernefs, and Love; they were equally transported with each other, and 'tis hard to fay which had the better in this Race of Paffion. *Idalia*, indeed, testified hers no other way than in liftning with a pleas'd Attention to his Vows; but there needed no more to make the happy Lover confider her as half obtain'd already, and tho he did not immediately prefs for the Gratification of his Wifhes, he did not in the leaft defpair. He made her feveral Vifits, in which nothing happen'd of any greater confequence than to increafe her Admiration of him. She never faw him without difcovering fome new Perfection; and that Height of Paffion with which fhe at laft regarded him, would be injured by an ordinary Lover's Imagination of it. But notwithstanding the rapturous Reflection of being beloved by a Man who appear'd fo every way meritorious, fhe had pretty near as equal a fhare of Difquiet, that he had never in all his Sollicitations mention'd the leaft word of Marriage. A thoufand, and a thoufand times he had told her, That he lived but in her fight—That he fhould court Death as a Bleffing, if any Accident fhould deprive him of her—That the united Charms of her whole Sex befides would be ineffectual to alienate his Thoughts one moment from her—and fwore as many Vows of an eternal Conftancy, as there were Saints in Heaven to witnefs 'em. She knew he aim'd with an unbounded Ardor to poffefs her,

her, but knew not by what way he wish'd to do so: and this, whenever it came cross her Thoughts, embitter'd all the Sweetness of his Love, and shock'd her to the Soul. She resolv'd at length to summon all her Courage, to say something to him which should oblige him to discover what his Intentions were; and she had no sooner fix'd herself in a Determination to do so, than she found she had more cause for it than before she had been sensible of.

THERE are Times when even the most prudent are not Masters of their Actions, how then could it be expected that the Young, Gay, Enflamed, *Myrtano* should have always the power of commanding his, in Opportunities such as he enjoy'd! As yet, indeed, he never had transgressed the strictest Rules of Decency; but *Desire* becoming, by Restraint, more fierce, at last grew wild, and would no longer endure to be controul'd by dull Respect.

HE never came to *Vicenza* but he staid a Night or two: A little Room adjoining to *Idalia's* Chamber was that in which they generally sup'd together, and seldom parted early. As they were entertaining each other on the usual Theme, and mingling Kisses with their Vows of Passion, by some Accident his Sleeve catching hold of a Corner of a Table on which the Lights were set, he threw it down: What Lover is not fond of Darkeness! The impatient *Myrtano* blest the happy Chance, and thinking this the lucky Moment ordain'd

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ordain'd to give him all his Soul at present long'd for ; he snatch'd the trembling Fair, and easily finding his way into the next Room, bore her to the Bed, and was pretty near the Accomplishment of his Desires, before the Surprize she was in, at this sudden Change of his Behaviour, could permit her to make any Resistance; but when she did, it was so strenuously, that without being guilty of the same Violence as *Ferdinand* had been, it was impossible for him to proceed. In spite of all the tender Passion with which she had regarded him—in spite of the secret Inclinations which, perhaps, at this very instant work'd very strongly within her in his favour—in spite of all his Tears, his Prayers, his Vows, her *Virtue* got the better and triumph'd o'er *Desire*. But tho she had gain'd, with such unequal Arms, a Conquest so truly glorious, she could not assure herself of *maintaining* it ; nor would consent to pardon his Attempt but on condition he would leave her, and retire that moment to his own Apartment. He, who was not of a Humour apt to despond, and had a real Passion for her, thought it best to comply, not doubting but a second Endeavour might prevail on her to *bestow* what he found he could not now obtain but by *Force*.

BUT his Behaviour had wrought a quite different Effect on the Mind of *Malina* than he imagin'd.—She had already suffer'd too much by that unruly Passion, which goes by the mistaken name of *Love*, to think the Man who took the same Measures had any other Design than to ruin her : and the Racks that she endured in endeavouring to vanquish a

Tenderneſs which ſhe had ſo much reaſon to believe an Enemy to her Honour, were paſt the reach of Thought. Reſolving, however, to be certain of the Truth of what ſhe fear'd, ſhe put in execution the Deſign ſhe before had form'd; and as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him come into her Chamber the next Morning, plucking up all the Courage ſhe was miſtreſs of, ſhe ſaluted him in this manner: ' The Confuſion I was ' in laſt night, ſaid ſhe, took from me the ' Power of reſenting, as I ought, the mean ' Opinion your Behaviour teſtified you have ' of my Virtue. I had too entire a Confi- ' dence in your Honour to imagine you were ' capable of harbouring a Thought to my ' prejudice; but as you have ſhow'd me the ' Error I was guilty of, I ſhould indeed de- ' ſerve Contempt, could I conſent to remain ' longer under a Roof where the Maſter of it ' makes ſo ill a uſe of the Power my fond Be- ' lief has given him.'——It was to no pur- poſe that he endeavour'd to qualify the Bit- terneſs of theſe Reproaches, by all the tender Expreſſions he was able; for perceiving he was yet far from making that Offer which alone could convince her he meant her fair, ſhe grew more ſenſibly enraged, and now bent to try him to the utmoſt, ' Speak no ' more, Don Myrtano, reſum'd ſhe; the Man ' that would diſhonour me can never love me.— ' 'Tis brutal Paſſion, not ſincere Affection, ' that acts as you have done. Did you, in- ' deed, believe me worthy of the Tenderneſs ' you ſo well can feign, Reſpect had govern'd ' Appetite, and fetter'd looſe Deſire.—All ' Wiſhes, all Inclination would have been ' ſtiſſed

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‘stified till the Church’s Sanction had made it lawful.—But I perceive, too late for my Repose, (*continued she, bursting into Tears*) that I am fallen too low for such a Hope.’ She spoke no more for some time, both in expectation of his Answer, and to indulge a few Sighs, which the Suppression of had made uneasy to her. But he was too much confounded at her last words to be able to return an immediate Answer to ’em: He loved her indeed with a Transcendency of Passion, but there were many Reasons which oppos’d his marrying her; it being wholly improper, however, for him to tell her so, he artfully evading the Question, turn’d the Discourse on the unbounded Force of Love, and how little it was in the power of a Person possess’d with it, to repel the most unexcusable Instigations of it. But *Idalia* perceiving, with an Infinity of Grief and Vexation, the Deceit, would not be so put off; and in plain Terms assured him this should be the last Moment of his seeing her, unless he gave her some convincing Proof he had no other Intentions than what would be consistent with her Honour to approve of. Not all his Wit, not all his persuasive Eloquence, than which never Man had more, could furnish him with Expressions prevalent enough to occasion the least Alteration in her Humour.—She still insisted on the Article of Marriage, and he was at last obliged to confess that there were some Particulars in his Circumstances which as yet she was ignorant of, that made it impossible for him to answer her Demands in the manner she desired at present. He palliated, however, the Bitterness of this

Reply with ten thousand Proteftations of eternal Love, and giving her a folemn Oath, that in a few Days ſhe ſhould be ſatisfy'd in every thing, engaged a Promise from her not to leave *Vicenza* till he return'd.

HERE was now an Alteration in the Fate of this diſtracted Lady, ſhe thought herſelf the moſt wretched of created Beings; all that can be conceived of Shame, Deſpair, Grief, Rage, and Horror, is ſhort of what ſhe felt in this Diſappointment of her high-raiſ'd Hopes.—— She lov'd, ſhe lov'd to Madneſs a Man whom ſhe was now too ſenſible aim'd only at her Diſhonour, and yet ſhe was obliged to him, was ſtill under his Roof; and what was worſe, in the cruel Neceſſity of either ſtill remaining ſo, or returning to *Venice*, the Thought of which was Death, after the Noiſe her late Adventures had made there.— Oh the Severity of the Struggle, when *Love* and *Virtue* are at variance, and rend the divided Soul with equal Fury! —— Yet ſuch was her Condition; and, unable entirely to vanquiſh the Efforts of *either*, by turns took part with *both*: and, 'tis uncertain whether wholly following the Emotions of her impatient Paſſion, ſhe at laſt had not yielded to be *Myrtano's* on any Terms; or, guided by the other, had not reſolved to quit his Houſe, and fly the Danger which ſo imminently threaten'd her if ſhe ſtaid; if in the miſt of her Diſtraction ſhe had not receiv'd a Letter which at once determined her Reſolve. It came to her the next Day after *Myrtano* had taken leave of

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of her, and the Contents, which were written in an unknown Hand, were these:

TO DONNA IDALIA DE
BELLSACHE.

IF your Willingness to believe, has not already rendered the Caution I would give you ineffectual, this may prevent the Ruin which is design'd for you.

MY Intimacy with Don Myrtano has not only drawn from him the Secret of your being lodged at his Villa, but also of the Professions he has made you: As you, perhaps, are ignorant of his Engagements with the Neice of Count Miramont, you may with the greater ease be brought to credit what he says.——But after the knowledge of it, it will, to the Punishment the Crime itself will draw upon you, add that of the Contempt of the whole World, should you persist to listen to his Vows.——In time, most lovely Idalia, retire from a Place which is design'd your Scene of Ruin.——The vain, gay, inconstant Myrtano thinks no Woman worthy of a serious Passion.——And as Interest is the greatest Motive of his Marriage, so to triumph over the Weakness of your Sex, is the only Inducement to his Endeavours of adding to the number of those his Protestations have undone, the credulous Idalia.——I have no other Interest in giving you this Advice, than to save you the Shame and Misery of a too late Repentance, and my Friend the Sin of having occasion'd it.——What use you make of it, I shall be informed by
him

him who will not be at the pains of concealing any thing he accounts so trivial, as an *Amour* such as he is entring into with you.——Be kind, therefore, to yourself, fly his destructive Charms; and when you have escaped the Snare, shall know who was

Your Adviser.

THIS was enclosed in another Paper, on which was writ these Lines :

SINCE I writ the Enclosed, I hear by Don Myrtano, that, apprised of his ungenerous Dealing, you design to quit his House; if it really be your Intention, you ought to have conceal'd it, since he resolves to take effectual Measures to secure you there, at least, till, by Force or Insinuation, he has obtained a Gratification of his Desires——which he tells me shall be delay'd no longer than a few Days.

AS passionately enamour'd as *Idalia* was, she had a stock of Haughtiness, which nothing could surmount; and her *Pride* receiving as severe a shock by this Intelligence as her *Vertue*, it entirely turn'd the Scale, and weigh'd down Love.——'SDeath! said she to herself, dare he presume to think thus meanly of me?——Sollicited for a *Prostitute*, while in the mean time his serious Vows are address'd to another!——O Torture! What has the Neice of *Miramont* to boast superior to the Daughter of *Bernardo*?——False!—stupid!—blind!—ungrateful Traytor!——But I'll not endure it.——Daggers or Poisons shall revenge me.—I'll murder him, and then myself. In this manner

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manner did she rave, till almost breathless with the swelling Passion, she'd stop, and read the fatal Scroll again ; and coming to that part of it which mention'd that this unknown *Adviser* had his Intelligence from *Myrtano* himself,—Hell and Confusion, cry'd she out, the Villain has expos'd me too !——My easy Nature, and my fond Belief is Food for the base Mirth of all his lewd Companions——Every tender Folly,—each unguarded Languishment betray'd, and ridiculed.—Distraction ! Can I live and suffer it !——Then contemplating farther on what she had read,——but yet, resumed she, this is the least of Ills that is already done, the Monster threatens me with more and greater.—Oh ! whither shall I turn to escape ? As she was employ'd in these perplex'd Meditations, a Servant that us'd to attend her in her Chamber, came in to ask if she wanted any thing. *Idalia*, who was by nature extremely violent in all her Passions, and had taken the least pains to vanquish them, could not contain herself before this Creature ; and Jealousy being the uppermost Emotion of her Soul, she presently enquired if she knew the Neice of Count *Miramont* ; to which the Wench having answered that she did——‘ And is she handsome, cry'd the other impatiently ?’ ‘ To an infinite degree, said the cunning Creature, Heaven never made a Face more beautiful, except your own.’—No Flattery, resumed *Idalia*, I am not in a Humour to receive it.—But if you would oblige, inform me of all you know concerning the intended Marriage between that Lady and your Master.’ *Ardella*, so she was call'd, affected a pro-

prodigious Surprize at these words, and suffered herself to be asked a hundred times before she made any Reply; and when she did, it was in such a manner as gave no Satisfaction. This Behaviour put *Idalia* almost beside herself: she was persuaded that she knew more than she was willing to reveal; and, wild with the Uncertainty, pray'd, promis'd, threaten'd, and accompany'd all she said with such Pressures, that the other appeared moved by 'em, and at last confessed, that her Master was indeed to be married to that Lady, that every thing was at that very time preparing for their Nuptials——and that never were two Persons more passionately charm'd with each other than they appear'd to be.——

‘ But, Madam, *added she, with a well-counterfeited Fear,* should you reveal the least Syllable of what I have told you, to my Master, I am certain he would not let me live an Hour.’—— ‘ Trouble not yourself, cry'd *Idalia, interrupting her,* I never more will see him.——No, *continued she, raising her Voice, and stamping,* I call just Heaven, and every Saint to witness, I never will consent to see, or hear him more.——Too much already have I listned to his perjur'd Vows——which, when I do again, may all the Plagues of Earth and Hell fall on me.——May I be ruin'd, then thrown off to scorn——driven round the World with no Companion but my Infamy, and not one Friend to pity, or relieve me, till some unlook'd for, horrid kind of Death o'ertakes me, and sinks my Soul, with all its Load of Guilt, beyond the reach of Mercy.’——A thousand such like

Im-

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Imprecations did she make; but where to go to avoid the Penalty of them, she was for a good while undetermined. At last she remember'd to have heard of a *Monastery* at *Verona*, which being a Place she was utterly unknown at, she made choice of: It was there she designed to fix, knowing it would be easy for her immediately after she was introduced, to write to her Father for a Supply of Money, against the Time of her being initiated; for she was now in the mind to leave the World for ever. She could not think of quitting *Myrtano's* House without the knowledge of *Ardella*, and therefore communicated to her what her Intentions were; to which she, with a seeming Reluctance, consented, and promis'd to order things for her Departure with that Secrecy, that no other Servant in the Family should have any suspicion of it.

ALL the necessary Preparations for her little Journey being made, by Break of Day she left *Vicenza*; but with what Heart-akings, those who, like her, have tore themselves from all that's dear, can best be judge. At her Departure, she gave a Letter to *Ardella*, with a pressing Entreaty to deliver it to *Myrtano*; it was full of Upbraidings, mixed with Tenderness, and expressed in so moving a manner the Anguish of her Soul, that it was scarce possible for a Heart which had ever known the Force of Love, to read it without melting; and perhaps, even in the midst of her Indignation, was not without a Wish that it might bring him after her to *Verona*.——
She had still Remains enough of Vanity to de-
L fire

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fire to have him in her power, tho' she had made so solemn a Vow never to make any other use of it, than to disdain and hate him.

BUT what befel her in her way to *Verona*, and the vast Variety of surprizing Incidents, which ensued each other thro' the whole Course of her unhappy Life, I must defer till another Opportunity ; having already spun out the *Beginning* of her Misfortunes to such a length, that the *Continuance* of them would give me a just Apprehension of becoming *tiresome* to those I endeavour to *divert*.

F I N I S.



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Unfortunate Mistress.

A

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IDALIA:

OR,

The Unfortunate Mistress.

PART II.



WITH no other Companions than her own disturb'd Meditations, and one Man, whom Don Myr-tano's Servant-Maid had provided for her as a Guide, did the sorrowful *Idalia* quit the House of her Beloved. They had not travel'd many Hours, before she found herself in a place suited as it were, by Nature, to her present Disposition: It was a Forest, wild and desolate, the trackless Paths discover'd not that any

PART II.

A

Human

Human Feet had ever trod them——No Fields of Corn, no Vines, no Olives here were planted, no limpid Streams, no cool refreshing Rivulets appear'd to charm the Eye with gay delightful Prospects, and with their pleasing Murmurs sooth the listning Ear; but sap-less Trees, whose wind-bent, leaf-less, Twigs hung quivering to oppose the Travellers passage, and rank, unwholesome Weeds, unfit for Use, hemm'd in the Borders of some stagnate Brooks, which here and there, by length of Time, the falling Rains had made, compos'd a sad, unblest'd, Variety, and spread an *Area* of nought but Horror. The deep *Resvery* she was in, which the melancholy Solitude of every thing about her had indulg'd, prevented her from taking any notice how improbable it was that this should be a Road; especially such a one as that of consequence must be, which led to *Verona*, than which no Town in *Italy* was more frequented: But they were not enter'd into it above some two or three hundred Paces, before the Man appointed to conduct her, stopping his Horse, obliged her to do so too; and looking on her with a Countenance between stern and troubled, 'Madam, said he, what think you of this Place? Does it not seem cut out for Rapes, and Murders, and every Act of Horror?' These Words, and the Manner in which they were spoke, was sufficient to rouse *Idalia* from that Lethargy of Thought she had been in, and wake her into Terror: 'Could I believe my Life were an Offence, reply'd she, or were I conscious of any Action which should excite Revenge, I might, indeed, suspect that I should find it here.'—'Innocence, resumed he, is

The Unfortunate Mistress. 3

' is not always a Protection.—You have, per-
' haps, incur'd more Displeasure than you are
' sensible of—for what cause, is not my busi-
' ness to examine ; but I have received a Re-
' ward to put an end to your Misfortunes by
' this—— With these last words he show'd
her a Dagger which he had wore conceal'd
under his Riding-Coat. As much as *Idalia* had
threatned to do a violence on herself, as much
as she thought Life a Burthen, ruin'd in her
Fortune and Reputation, disappointed in her
Love, and depriv'd of every thing the World
calls dear; the Imagination she was so near
Death, made her Soul shake with Agonies un-
felt before. She burst into a Flood of Tears,
and throwing herself at his feet, conjur'd him
to spare her, in Terms so soft, so moving, so
persuasive, that the Heart which had deny'd
must have been more than savage. The most
harden'd, and accusom'd Murderer, must have
relented at such a pity-moving Object, and
dropt the Dagger, if not turn'd the Point a-
gainst himself, for having thus alarm'd her.—
What then became of him whose Sentiments,
however he appear'd at present, were full of
Honour, and scorn'd so base, so barbarous a
Deed. Tears started from his Eyes, and his
whole Frame seem'd convuls'd with inward
Tremblings : ' Rise, Madam ! rise ! (*said he,*
' *as soon as he had power to speak*) and, if you
' can, forgive the Terror I have caus'd, and
' for which I am ready to expire with Grief
' and Penitence.—But to convince you I ne-
' ver had a Thought to execute the bloody Pur-
' pose I presumed to threaten, I have provided
' you a place where you may remain in safety,
A 2 ' which

‘ which ’tis impossible you can do at *Verona*.’ The blooming Colour which had so lately forsook the Cheeks of the affrighted *Fair*, return’d, at this Assurance, with all its wonted Beauty; and looking more earnestly than she had done before on the Person whose Behaviour had given her such different Emotions, she could easily perceive, tho his Garb was mean, his Air, and the Address with which he pronounced these last words, were far from that of a *Ruffian*. She imagin’d also, that she saw something in his Face which was not unknown to her; but when, or how she had been acquainted with it, was out of her power to recollect.

AFTER she had testified the Sense she had of his obliging Offer by some Expressions of Gratitude, she desired to be inform’d of what he knew concerning the Inhumanity intended against her, and who they were that persecuted her with such a causeless Malice. To which, after a little Pause, he reply’d in this manner: ‘ ’Tis easy for you, Madam, said he, to guess that *Ardella* had her share in the abhorr’d Design, because you know very well that it was by her I was appointed your Conductor; and I shall make no scruple to confess that it was from her mouth I receiv’d my Orders to dispatch you, and from her Hand my Hire, which was indeed a Sum too great for a Creature of her Station to bestow; and, if she had not told me that by performing her Injunction I should oblige a powerful Friend, would have made me know it must be to a Person of the highest Rank I owed it.’ ‘I would be impossible to represent the Consternation

The Unfortunate Mistress. 5

nation *Idalia* was in at hearing these words :
An Imagination came immediately into her
head more dreadful to her than the Death she
had escaped, and lifting up her Eyes streaming
a second time with Tears, ‘ Oh too well, (*cry’d*
‘ *she*) too well, I understand you ; *Myrtano’s*
‘ Servant could not reach the Price of such an
‘ Undertaking, but *Myrtano’s* self might well
‘ afford it.—— Oh ! ’tis he—— ’tis he,
‘ (*pursued she, in an Agony which was not far off*
‘ *Distraction*) the false, ungrateful, perjur’d
‘ Man ! Conscious of Guilt, and taught by
‘ my Behaviour how much I scorn’d to aid his
‘ brutal Raptures, the Passion he avow’d is
‘ turn’d to Hate.—Engaged to another, and
‘ unable to perform what Honour did require,
‘ my Death alone could silence my Upbraidings.
‘ Cruel Reward for Love !——Inhuman Poli-
‘ cy !——Barbarous *Myrtano* !——

I N these and many more the like Complains
did she pour out the Anguish of her Soul,
without any regard of the Person who was
witness of them ; nor would he interrupt her,
being willing to be let into the whole Affair
between her and *Myrtano*, till perceiving she
was silent, tho for many Reasons, ‘ Madam,
‘ *said he, Don Myrtano* is the Man in the world
‘ I least esteem, yet I cannot suffer you to con-
‘ tinue in this Opinion, without being guilty
‘ of an Injustice I could not answer to my-
‘ self.—*Myrtano*, Madam, I dare swear, is per-
‘ fectly innocent of any Design against your
‘ Life—What he may have form’d against your
‘ Honour, yourself is the best Judge.’

HE said no more, waiting to hear in what manner she would reply; but tho' the Alteration of her Looks and Gestures sufficiently testify'd the Effect his Words had wrought in her, she forbore to speak how much she rejoic'd to find *Myrtano* guiltless of the Crime she had just now suspected him of, and probably imagining he might also be so of every thing he had been accus'd of, conjur'd her kind Informer to acquaint her if there were any thing of Truth in the Report, that he was to be married to the Neice of Count *Miramont*; which he assuring her that there was, and that the Nuptials were to be solemniz'd so suddenly, that all the necessary Preparations for the Magnificence of it were as good as finish'd, made her again relapse into her former Violence of Temper.—

'Then he is a Traytor still (*cry'd she, transported at once with Grief and Indignation*) and is guilty of a worse Crime than conspiring against my Life could be.— My Peace of Mind, my everlasting Quiet he has destroy'd—expos'd—betray'd me to a Rival's Scorn—'sdeath! to pretend Courtship to me, at the very time he was solliciting another—the same insinuating Looks—the same dissembled Tenderness—the same undoing Vows address'd to both at once!— Was ever Man so base?' She had run on with a great deal more of the same nature, if he had not put a stop to her, by telling her, that whatever reason she had to condemn *Myrtano*, his intended Bride had certainly an equal Share, who lov'd as much, and was as much deceiv'd— Nay infinitely more (*added he*) in my opinion, since, had not her

Qua-

The Unfortunate Mistress. 7

Quality been too great for him to hazard such a Breach, you had doubtless had the Preference in all things as well as in his Affections. Notwithstanding the solemn Vow *Idalia* had made never to see him more, she could not be told any thing which flatter'd the Tenderneſs ſhe had for him, without feeling a ſecret Pleaſure; and having enter'd into a Diſcourſe of the Lady deſign'd to be his Wife, ſhe asked a thouſand Queſtions concerning her Wit, Beauty, and Humour: for this envy'd Fair having been brought up from her Infancy at *Rome* with her Uncle Count *Miramont*, and but lately come to *Venice*, ſhe had never happen'd to ſee her; but her jealous Curioſity receiv'd but little Satisfaction in this point, there appear'd in the Perſon ſhe enquir'd of, a great Unwillingneſs to make any Anſwers to ſuch Interrogatories; and to put an end to them, he reminded her, that if ſhe deſign'd to go to that little *Aſylum* he had provided for her, it was high time to begin their Journey, it being a good many Miles diſtant from the Place they now were in. She readily acquieſc'd, and that Evening about Sun-ſet, arriv'd at a neat, but ſmall Dwelling, ſuch as the Poet deſcribes to be the Abode of *Baucis* and *Philemon*: A good old Man and Woman, pretty near the ſame Age, came forth to welcome her; and while her Guide was employ'd in taking care of his Horſes, conducted her in, and ſhow'd her to a Chamber, which, tho' it could boaſt no Finery, was extremely clean and decent, and had every thing in it fit to charm a contemplative Mind. The Windows were cover'd with *Fillarée* and *Jeffamine*, only where here and there Spaces were cut to give the Eye a moſt delightful

Prospect o'er distant Meadows, Fields, and Vineyards; a sweet Confusion *without* fill'd the whole rural Scene, and fed extensive Thought with all the Charms of Nature—— *Within*, a vast Variety of collected Books, and choicest Maps, brought to the View the spacious Universe, improving Reason with the Aids of *Art*.

IDALIA, whose Wishes at this time were dead to all the noisy Splendor of a Town, seem'd perfectly pleas'd with it, and told her Hosts she should think it the greatest Blessing Life could now afford her, to be permitted to spend the Remainder of her Days with them in that agreeable Retirement. While she was speaking, he who had brought her there, came into the Room, and took upon him to answer what she had been saying in this manner: 'I am highly 'satisfy'd, Madam, *said he*, that there is any 'thing which can make you wish a Confinement here, so long as is necessary for your 'Safety; but can never consent, that after that 'time you should deprive the World of its 'most valuable Ornament—— No, no (*continued he very respectfully*) you must again shine 'out the Star of *Venice*, ador'd by all who gaze 'upon you, and resume that native Lustre which 'the Baseness of Mankind has 'for a while 'eclips'd, but never can extinguish.'—— 'O 'talk of it no more (*interrupted she*) I never will 'return to *Venice*—what! to see the History of 'my Misfortunes writ in the Smiles of every 'Face that meets me—to endure the stinging 'Satyr, the Reflections which all the Friends 'of *Ferdinand* and *Henriquez* will throw upon 'me—and that worst Curse, the Scorn of that
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The Unfortunate Mistress. 9

‘ too happy hated She, who soon, you say, *Myrtano* must call Wife. — O no! I cannot bear it! — ruin’d in all my Hopes, and past the Power of even Heaven itself to make my Woes less terrible; I’ll hide ’em ever from the unpitying World, and die alone unknown, and unlamented.’ ‘ Were your Condition so desperate as you imagine (*resum’d he*) I know not if I should persuade you to return; but there may be, perhaps, a way found out to bring you to your Father’s Arms with as much Honour as when you left them, and raise you above the Rage or the Disdain of all whom you call Enemies.’ ‘ Oh! forbear (*said she, unwilling to give way to a Hope of any thing which seem’d so much an Impossibility*) ‘ forbear, obliging Stranger! to turn my Thoughts back on the Scene of my past Happiness, or sooth Imagination with such idle Flattery of what’s to come. — Can e’er the Days of Innocence return? — Can my polluted Honour e’er be cleans’d from the vile Stain it bears? — Can I again appear a Virgin? — racking Reflections? — why do you rouse them in me? — why, after such Proofs of Generosity and Pity, do you alarm Remembrance with these dread Ideas, to make Thought sick, the Light grow hateful to me, and that Life you gave scarce worth my Thanks?’ ‘ Far be it from me (*answer’d he, bowing*) to renew the Memory of what may be distasteful; but I would fain persuade you to believe, that Heaven, which has so miraculously preserv’d your Life, will also make it happy. — Surprising things by a Hand unseen are often brought to pass; when you left *Myrtano’s* House, you little suspected that
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' the Person appointed for your *Guide*, was de-
 ' sign'd to be your *Murderer*: Nor did they
 ' who brib'd me to that execrable Deed, ima-
 ' gine how distant my Thoughts were from
 ' such an Undertaking.—— Why then should
 ' you not hope, that by some Turn of Fate as
 ' strange and unexpected, you may again be
 ' blest.—— ' Oh! 'tis impossible (*cry'd the*
 ' *uneasy Idalia.*) ' Suppose (*resum'd the other ha-*
 ' *stily*) your Beauty, in spite of all has happen'd,
 ' should charm a Man whose Quality and For-
 ' tune you could have no Objections to, the
 ' Title of his Wife would silence Calumny, re-
 ' store your Fame, and make you thought as
 ' happy as he'd be truly blest.' ' If such an
 ' Offer (*reply'd she in a haughty Air*) ever should
 ' occur, he must have more than Quality and
 ' Fortune to recommend him to my Esteem;
 ' fallen as I am, I would be lower yet, rather
 ' than sell my Liberty for sordid Interest and the
 ' World's Opinion.—— No, no, tho' lost to
 ' all besides, I still am Mistress of myself—my
 ' own unconquerable *Will*.—— *Idalia* can be
 ' by nought but Inclination subdued, and that,
 ' alas! (*pursued she softening her Voice*) is lavish'd
 ' all on the too lovely, false *Myrtano*.—— 'Tis
 ' therefore in Solitude alone I can have Peace—
 ' remov'd from the tumultuous World, its short-
 ' liv'd Pleasures, and its lasting Cares, I'll lan-
 ' guish out a dull, insipid, tranquil Life, and
 ' sink by unperceiv'd degrees into the Grave.'
 ' And have you no Reluctance (*resum'd he*) no
 ' soft Regret for all the racking Grievs your
 ' noble Father's Heart endures while ignorant
 ' where you are?' ' 'Twas my Design, *answer'd*
 ' *she*, to have writ to him from *Verona*; but as
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The Unfortunate Mistress. II

‘I am disappointed of the Journey I intended
‘thither, I have not now Conveniency.’ ‘If
‘that (*cry’d he, in a Tone which express’d a Zea-*
‘*lousness to serve her*) will be any way con-
‘ducive to your Satisfaction, I offer myself to
‘be the Messenger—Prepare a Letter, and it
‘shall be faithfully deliver’d; and whatever
‘other Trust you would repose in me, depend
‘on the execution of, with the same assurance
‘as tho’ you saw it done.’

THE prodigious Obligations *Idalia* had re-
ceiv’d from him, made her scrupulous of adding
to the Number, by giving him any future
Troubles; which he perceiving, protested that
the highest Recompence she could make for
what he had done, was to permit him to con-
tinue to do her all the good Offices in his
power: But she, whose Disposition was utterly
averse to receiving Favours, especially at a time
when she consider’d herself not in a condition
to return them, would very feign have declin’d
making any farther use of him, telling him she
would stay at that House but till she was a
little recovered from the Fatigue she had been
in, and then either pursue her Journey to *Ve-*
rona, or go to some other place where there was
a Monastery, being absolutely determin’d to be-
come a Nun. But this last Resolution seem’d to
alarm him much more than every thing she had
said before:— And after a little Pause, he let
her know that this was not the way to recom-
pence the Civilities he had done her.——

‘If you look on any thing that I have done
‘(*said he*) as an Obligation, you would per-
‘mit me to receive my Thanks from *Don Ber-*
‘*nardo*,

'nardo, perhaps it may be in his power to make
'me ample Reparation for that little Loss of
'Time 'twill take me up to go to *Venice*.——

This Expresssion, and some others to the same purpose, won her to do as he desir'd; she consented to write, because her Father should requite the Obligations she had receiv'd: but when she was about to do it, never was she at such a loss in what manner she should begin, or whether she should conceal, or discover the Misfortunes she had met with. At last, after many blottings-out, and tearing, she made a shift to write these few Lines.

To Don Bernardo.

I Doubt not, most Honoured Signior, but at the receipt of this, you will expect to be satisfy'd at full, of the Reasons which have depriv'd you of a Daughter;—but it is not the least of my Misfortunes that they are of such a nature, that the disclosing them would add to their Severity.—— Pardon then, I beseech you, that I conceal them even from you—and with the same Indulgence, I have formerly found, continue to think of me.—— I never can be happy enough to see you more, being determin'd to forsake the World: As to my choice of a Monastery, and what Order I should take, I leave to your Management, as I shall some part of my History to be related to you by the Bearer of this, to whom I am not only indebted for my Life, but also this Opportunity of entreating your Blessing, and avowing myself ever

Your most Obedient,
Tho' Unhappy Daughter,

IDALIA.

P. S.

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P. S. My Deliverer informs me it is in Don Bernardo's power to more than recompence the Obligations he has heap'd upon Idalia—— If so, I know he need no more than to acquaint you in what manner to engage your grateful Assent.

WITH this Letter, she gave to him that was to carry it, a Ring from her Finger, entreating him to accept of that as an Acknowledgment of her Gratitude, which he receiv'd with an Extasy of Joy! a Transport impossible to be conceal'd, and far above what the intrinsic Value of it, meerly as a Ring (had it been worth a thousand times more than it was) could have rais'd in the most covetous Mind. She observ'd it with a Surprise as visible to him, as was the Rapture he had been in to her; and unwilling she should infer any further from it, than he thought proper to declare, 'I am extremely glad, Madam! said he, of this Testimony, which, to those who employ'd me, will appear an infallible one, that I have murdered you, and by that means, perhaps, engage an Addition to the Reward I have already receiv'd.' These last Words were utter'd so awkwardly, and were so little of a piece with the rest of his Behaviour, that it rather increas'd, than diminish'd the Consternation she was in. There pass'd not much more between them, he seem'd in haste to be gone, and only recommending her to the Care of the People of the House; and assuring her, that in a very few Days he would return with an Answer to her Letter, took his leave.

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THE Emotions she was in, when left at liberty to consider on what had befallen her since she came from *Vicenza*, were at once pleasing, and vexatious; her Deliverance from so imminent a Danger, commanded her most thankful Acknowledgments; but then the Confirmation of the Falshood of *Myrtano* made her almost wish for Death.—To reflect on the Behaviour of this unknown Person, led her into such a mazy Labyrinth of Thought, that she could neither get out, nor in the least assure herself where it would end—there appear'd something so contradictory in his Words and Actions, that it was impossible for her to form any Judgment of him.—— His Garb was the meanest that could be, but yet there was an undescribable Somewhat in his Air, which spoke him accustomed to wear better.—— The Reward he told her he had receiv'd to murder her, would have made her believe he must be of the lowest Rank of Life; but then the noble Detestation which sparkled in his Eyes at mentioning it, declar'd him far above even a pretending to enter into such Measures without some reason for it, which at present she could not penetrate into.—— But the most shocking Consideration of all was, that she saw, by his manner of receiving the Ring—by some unguarded Words, and Sighs which, in spite of the care he took to suppress them, burst with Vehemence from his troubled Breast, that her Beauty had had the same Effect on him, it was ordinary for it to cause in others; and as vain and proud of giving Pain, as she had ever been, could not look on this Conquest without the
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The Unfortunate Mistress. 15

utmost Disquiet. If he were of that inferior Degree he spoke himself, nothing could be more galling than the Thoughts of being belov'd by such a one; and if he were a Man of that Quality, which some part of his Behaviour denoted, she had reason enough to fear she had fled from *Vicenza* for no other end, than to give an opportunity to *one* to act what she had done a Violence on her own Inclination to avoid from *another*. 'How wretched is my Fate! (*said she to herself*) Have I to preserve my Honour free from any second Stain, broke thro' the soft Enchantments of my Passion, and tore my very Heart-strings when I resolv'd to quit the dear, the lov'd *Myrtano's* House?— And am I now in the power of a Stranger, one who looks on me with the same Desires—the same wild Vehemence of longing—one who, for ought I know, has brought me hither only to do what *Ferdinand* has done, and what *Myrtano* would?'— The more she deliberated, the more she found the Probability of this Conjecture, and at last confirm'd herself in the Reality of it so much, that she grew the most terrify'd Creature that ever was.

MORE Days had pass'd since the Departure of the Stranger, than she expected he would be absent; in which time she had us'd her utmost endeavour to discover who he was, by the old Man and Woman of the House: but they, faithful to the Trust repos'd in them, would not reveal the least Tittle, either of his Name or Family; and this Secrecy did not a little contribute to fix her in that Opinion she before had entertain'd, that she was placed there in order

to be the Sacrifice to his Passion as soon as he should return, and put her on a thousand Inventions how to avoid it: But, alas! what would the most subtle working Wit, back'd by the firmest Resolution, avail in a Circumstance such as hers? She was in a place which she neither knew the Name of, nor in what part of the Country it stood, and under the Care of People who she easily perceiv'd, tho' they waited on her with all possible Obedience, had a strict Eye on her Behaviour: for saying to them one day, with an Intention of founding them, that if she had a Conveniency, she would go to *Verona*, and wait there till either the Stranger should return, or she should hear from her Father by some other way; they told her they could not consent she should leave them, till they had permission from the Person who had brought her there. This was sufficient to make her know there was no Possibility of escaping by their means; but being fully bent some way or other to do it, she never left racking her Brains till she had found a Stratagem, which, tho' she could not promise herself she should succeed in, would be of no prejudice to her if it should fail. She told her old Landlord, that finding herself a little indispos'd, she believ'd it would be of infinite Service to her Health, if she walk'd out in a Morning and Evening to take the Air, as she observ'd he did: 'But, *said she*, I do not care to venture in the Dress I have been us'd to appear in, lest any Passengers happening to travel this way, should discover me; it would therefore be the greatest Obligation you could confer on me, if you would provide me with a Habit whereby I might

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‘ might be disguis’d, and by that means have
‘ the Freedom of ranging thro’ those delightful
‘ Groves and Meadows, the Prospect of which
‘ appears so tempting from my Windows.’ The
old *Trustee* look’d on his Wife all the time *Idalia*
had been speaking, as tho’ it was from her
Approbation he was to form his Answer; who,
as soon as she perceiv’d the other had concluded
what she had to say, gave it in this manner: ‘ I
‘ do not think (*said she*) that our Friend would
‘ thank us, if we should deny a Request so far
‘ from unreasonable:— The Air indeed may do
‘ the Lady good, and the whimsical Merriment
‘ of Men, who, at this time of Year, come in
‘ great numbers to gather Mulberry-Leaves for
‘ their Silkworms, divert her Melancholy.—
‘ I would have you by all means, provide her
‘ with a Dress such as our Country Maids are
‘ used to wear, and she may pass, and partake
‘ of all our rural Pleasures the time she stays
‘ here, without any Danger of Suspicion.’ The
Heart of *Idalia* leapt in her Breast at this ready
Assent of the Woman’s, which was immediately
follow’d by her Husband’s, and in a few Hours
this *Court-Beauty* was transform’d into a plain
Country Lass; and tho’ no Dress could render
her any other than the most lovely Woman in
the World, yet so great was her Desire to be
taken for what she represented, that she mi-
mick’d the Simplicity of their Blushes, and
way of curt’ying so artfully, that those who
were most acquainted with her might have
talk’d to her some time before they discover’d
the Deceit.

HAVING carry'd on her Plot thus far, the next thing she had to do, was to counterfeit a Chearfulness, and appear so highly satisfy'd with her Condition, that her *Guardians* might not imagine she had any Wishes to exchange it, and be less watchful over her; for wherever she went, they had continually attended her: but her Artifice deceiv'd them so well, that by degrees they grew more remiss, and at length would leave her to the privilege of meditating, as sometimes she took a Book out with her, or diverting herself with talking or listening to the comical Discourses of the Country Fellows employ'd in tying the Vines, and gathering Mulberry Leaves. She would not take her Flight the first Opportunity she had, because she did not know but they might have left her only to make trial what she would do, and be near enough to prevent her going, in case she should attempt it: But one day, having neither of them within hearing, she enquir'd, as tho' without design, what Towns were in the Neighbourhood of that Place; and was inform'd, that she was about forty Miles from any, but that the nearest was *Vorseny*. It was no small Grief to her to hear she was so remote, not believing she could be able to travel so far on foot. However, nothing being so dreadful to her as the Apprehensions what might befall her if she tarry'd where she was, she resolv'd to run all other Hazards to escape that; and looking on it as a particular Mark of the Care Providence had of her, in delaying the Stranger's Return so much longer than was expected, she thought it would be no other than

The Unfortunate Mistress. 19

than running wilfully into a Misfortune, to neglect making use of the smallest Means that should offer to take her from it. The very next time therefore that she found herself free from the Observation of her two Attendants, she walk'd as fast as her Strength would permit, directed by the Sun, thro' that part of the Country which she had been told led her to *Vorseny*. She came at length to a great Road, where she saw Numbers of poor People of both Sexes driving Asses before them loaded with these Leaves, which they had gather'd in the Morning, and were carrying to the Merchants. It was no small Consolation to the fair Wanderer to have something of her own Species to converse with, having till now met with no other Company in her Pilgrimage, than the Dumb Kind.— But being ask'd by some of them, whither she was going, and how it happen'd that such a fair young Maid undertook so great a Journey alone, and on foot, she was at the greatest loss in the World what Answer to make; till at last, bethinking herself what would be most suitable to the Capacities of those who enquir'd, and best disguise the Truth, she told them, that having a very severe Mother-in-law, she had fled from her ill Usage, and was going to seek a Service at *Vorseny*. The good People pity'd her extremly; and perceiving she was ready to faint with Weariness, contriv'd a way to set her on one of their Beasts, by taking off its Burthen of Leaves, and dividing it into as many Parcels as there were Asses, added a little to every one. By this means she got safe to the Town, and thanking her Fellow-Travellers for their Kindness, there took leave of them. She

went into a common Inn, being in no danger of being known in that Place, especially in the Garb she was in. The Fatigue she had undergone, made it necessary she should for some time repose herself: But, alas! the Disorders of her Mind would suffer her to take but little Rest, the various Adventures she had run thro' since that fatal Time of going to meet the perfidious *Florez*, the Grief her Absence and Disgrace had brought on her unhappy *Father*—the Death of *Henriquez*—her own eternal Ruin by the Violence of *Ferdinand*—the Agonies she had, and ever must endure for the Falshood of the lovely *Myrtano*—the Terror she had been in from the discover'd Passion of the Unknown—and the racking Perplexity where, or in what manner she should linger out the Residue of her unhappy Days; came all at once into her Thoughts, and threw her into a Condition little different from Madness.

SOME Weeks pass'd before she could get leave of her Confusion to resolve on any thing, till the little Stock of Money she had about her being pretty near exhausted, she began to consider that this was not a Place to continue in; and remembering that a young Lady, formerly an Intimate of her's, having on some Discontent forsook the World, was at a Convent of *Benedictines* at *Naples*, she promis'd herself a good deal of Satisfaction in her Company, if by any means she could reach thither: but it was so prodigious a Distance by Land, that it would require infinitely more to defray the Expence of such a Journey, than she was Mistress of. She therefore thought it the best way to go
first

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first to *Ancona*; which being a great Sea-Port Town, she did not doubt meeting with a Vessel there bound for the Place she desir'd. Every thing answer'd her Expectations, and nothing of any moment happening till she was got on board, I shall omit the Repetition of any Particulars of her little Journey, or the Uneasiness she was in while she staid at *Ancona*, which she was oblig'd to do: the Ship she had agreed to go in not being ready to sail in above a Month; and when it was, detain'd almost as long by adverse Winds.

THE Power of Beauty is the same in all degrees; the plain Country Habit which disguis'd the Daughter of a *Grandée*, could not deprive *Idalia* of her wonted Charms: she appear'd so lovely in the Eyes of *Rickamboll*, the Captain of the Ship, that from the first Moment he beheld her, he thought of nothing but the Means to possess her. He conceal'd his Intentions, however, till she was come on board; but he no sooner had her in his power, than he let her know he would make use of it for the Gratification of his Passion, if she consented not to yield to his Persuasions.

WHAT was now the Anguish, the Fear, the Horror, which seiz'd the Soul of this unhappy Lady? All that was pass'd appear'd a Blessing to her present State, confin'd within a little wooden World, whose proud Sovereign was absolute, and from the Fierceness of whose Nature she had no room to hope that Prayers or Tears would be of force to melt him—Here was no Possibility of escaping but by immediate

Death, and what she suffer'd in the Apprehension of his Brutality, is not to be described by Words: so I shall only say, it was such as could be equalled by nothing but his barbarous Insensibility of it. Trembling, fainting, and almost dying with her Fears, she was on her Knees in her Cabin imploring Heaven's Protection, when the Monster, resolved to perpetrate his horrid Wishes, came in to know her last Resolve. Perceiving his Intent, she would fain have flatter'd him into a Belief there was a Possibility of gaining her by gentle Means, and entreated him but to have patience till they came on shore; but he, who understood no more of Love than the brutal Part, burning to enjoy her, and not suspecting her to be of any higher Station than what her Habit represented, thought to make use of any further Ceremony would be an Indignity to himself, and by his *Actions*, as well as *Words*, let her see he was not to be moved. In vain she endeavour'd to set forth the Baseness of the Deed—in vain she wept, entreated, threaten'd; the Villain harden'd in such Crimes, but laugh'd at her Despair, and she was just on the point of being reduced to a Condition, such as, if she had lived after it, would have made her for ever hateful to herself, when Heaven, by the most unexpected Means, sent her a Deliverance. The Oaths, and Curses, with which the boisterous *Rickamboll* had endeavour'd to silence her Shrieks, on a sudden were out-done, by a confused and superior Roar on Deck, and immediately after a Discharge of Guns went off so loud, the Ship seem'd shatter'd with the Noise—a General Voice cry'd, *Where's our Captain?* and three or four of the affrighted

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affrighted Sailors burst into the Cabin, bawling out in their rude Fashion, that they were undone, a *Barbary Corsair* had clap'd his grappling Irons on board, and Death, or Captivity, was all they could expect——'Sdeath! could you not avoid him? Had you no Warning? said Rickamboll, starting from his amorous Combat; but he shall find no Cowards here.' With these Words he run out of the Cabin, follow'd by the rest of the Men, leaving the distress'd *Idalia* in a Dilemma, to which Party she should wish Success. If Rickamboll was victorious, she had no hope of escaping the Ill his wild Desires threaten'd her with, and Slavery itself seem'd far less dreadful to her—but then the thoughts of being in the power of *Infidels*, who, 'twas highly probable, might be inspired with the same Wishes, and would make no scruple to use a *Christian Captive* as they pleased, frighted her almost to death.—The Apprehensions of what she expected would ensue, whatever was the Issue of the Fight, drown'd all the Terrors of the present Danger, which, whoever has been Witness of one of these Sea-Skirmishes, may easily comprehend: But it lasted not long, the Number of the *Infidels* was infinitely superior to the *Christians*, and by the Death of Rickamboll and some of the stoutest of his Men, the rest of them, with the Ship, became an easy Prize. *Idalia*, all this while at her Devotions, was ignorant of what had happen'd, till she saw a Stranger of a most graceful Mien, attended by several Followers, come down the Stairs, and enter the Cabin where she was. *Abdomar*, for that was the Name of this Conqueror, had been formerly a Prisoner at *Florence*, and spoke very

good *Italian*, which was no inconsiderable piece of good Fortune to his *fair Captive*, for the obliging Terms he accosted her with (in spite of the Meanness of her Habit) dissipated, immediately, great part of her Fears: and reading in her Tears, and Tremblings, the Agony she was in, 'Be of comfort, lovely Maid, said he, 'you are fallen into the power of one, who 'scorns to take an ungenerous Advantage of it, '—one who has it not in his Nature willingly 'to offend any of your Sex, much less one to 'whom Heaven has been so particularly bountiful in bestowing all that can command Respect.—Your Lot, perhaps, (*continued he, perceiving she was still in some Disorder*) may become more glorious by this Captivity, than 'Freedom could offer you the Means to make 'it—the most angelick, softest, kindest, best, 'that ever was call'd Woman, will, by her 'Tenderness and Indulgence, make you forget 'whatever may have been dear to you, and oblige you to place your whole Felicity, as it 'will be your Honour, to be near her.'—Nothing in *Idalia's* present Circumstance could have afforded her a Consolation adequate to these last words: to hear he was a Lover, and that he was accompanied by his Adored, entirely set her free from those Apprehensions which of late had been so afflicting to her. And as soon as he had given orders for securing the other Prisoners under Hatches, suffer'd herself to be conducted by him into that Ship, of which he was Commander, with all the Chearfulness imaginable; as thinking, in being deliver'd from the brutal Attempt of *Rickamboll*, she had been deliver'd from the most terrible Misery that could befall her.

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her. *Abdomar* led her immediately into a Cabin, adorn'd with the choicest Curiosities which Art could produce in all the various Climates of the habitable World; the Floor was cover'd with the most rich, as well as most beautiful Tapestry that ever was seen; the Ground was Silver, on which were so dextrously interwoven all manner of fine Flowers, that they seem'd more the Handy-work of Nature than of human Skill; the Windows, which *without* were fenced from the dashing of the Waves with Chrystal in the manner of half Globes, *within* were chequered with green and gold Twist, each Square being join'd with precious Stones: Diamonds, Rubies, Emeralds, Chrysolites, and Saphirs, with their various-colour'd Lustre, spread such a dazzling Glory round the Room, that it even pain'd the Eye to look upon it: the greatest Magnificence that ever *Idalia* had beheld in *Venice*, than which no City in the World can boast of more, was so infinitely short of what now met her Eyes, that she had longer, and more heedfully regarded it, had not a greater, and yet surpassing Wonder, appear'd to attract her Admiration; it was the charming *Bell-raizia*, Mistress of *Abdomar*, who rising from a Couch of Crimson Taffety embroider'd with Gold and Pearl, step'd forward to meet and congratulate her Lover on his Victory: she spoke to him in the Language of their own Country, but there was something so sweet, so soft, so engaging in her Voice, that rendred it an Impossibility to hear her without feeling some part of that Pleasure which the looking on her did in a greater abundance bestow. To the most lovely and enchanting Form that Nature ever made,
there

there was also added all the Embellishments of Art—had she been in a Court where it was the sole Business of all about her to study what would most become her, she could not have been dress'd with greater Elegance: Her Hair, which was whiter, and more shining than Silver, and hung down in Tresses below her Waist, was only kept from falling o'er her Face by a Fillet of Diamonds; but as the greatest Art is to appear *artless*, this seeming Negligence had in it something so infinitely beyond the formal Ornaments of the *Europeans*, that whoever would desire to please, must covet to look like this lovely *Barbarian*. On the middle of the the Fillet there was fix'd a sort of a little Tree of Gold, on the Branches of which hung Jewels of a prodigious Largeness, but such a Height above her Head, that (the Sprigs on which they were fasten'd being shaded by some loose Hair, which flew out as tho disdainful of Restraint) made it seem to the Eye as tho they were self-poiz'd, and form'd a Constellation like *Ariadne's* Crown. On her slender, and fine proportion'd Body, she had a close Jacket of Gold Stuff; but the Sleeves were large, and tied up before almost as high as her Shoulders, with small sky-coloured Ribband mixed with Silver, and discover'd, as much as Decency would permit, her lovely Arms, which were encompass'd with Bracelets of several sorts of Jewels. In fine, her whole Appearance, her Face, her Shape, her Hair, her Habit, was surpassing what the most extensive Imagination can figure out, and forc'd *Idalia* (who was not over quick-sighted to the Perfections of her own Sex) whether she would or no, to confess within herself, that she had

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had never seen any thing so beautiful ! so glorious !

AFTER some little Discourse between the two Lovers, *Abdomar* presenting *Idalia*, said in *Italian*, 'What other Prizes my late Conquest has made me Master of, I thought unworthy of *Bellraizia*'s notice ; but this fair Maid, if she appear the same in your Eyes, as at first sight she did to mine, may merit to attend you.' The charming *Infidel* answer'd these Words in Terms infinitely obliging to *Idalia* ; but afterwards enquiring her Name, Family, whither she had designed to go, and for what reason so young a Maid had undertaken a Voyage, unaccompanied by any Friends or Relations, and other Particulars of her Life, the new-made *Slave* could make no other Reply than with her Tears ; which the other perceiving, and knowing well by Experience to what Extremes Love can transport the Heart that owns his Power, and imagining by her Mein, and something of a grand Look about her, which no Disguise could rob her of, that she was of a Quality superior to what she was willing to confess, would press her no farther at that time ; but desiring her to be as easy with her Fate as possible, and assuring her she should find nothing of Severity in her Servitude, commanded some of her other *Slaves* to place her in a Cabin, and leave her to that Repose, which, 'twas probable, after the late Fright, the Danger of the Fight had put her in, she might stand in need of.

IN spite of the various Reflections this unhappy *Fair* had on this sudden and prodigious Alteration

ration of her own Affairs, she could not forbear forgetting them a while, to contemplate on those of the Lady whom she must now call *Mistress*. It appear'd so odd that a Woman, such as the Looks and Habit of *Bellraizia* spoke her to be, should be the willing Partaker of Dangers, Fatigues, and Horrors, such as were inseparable from the Profession of *Abdomar*, that she could not but think there was something very extraordinary in the Adventure: but her Surprise was very much heighten'd, when the next Morning she was summon'd with the rest of the Slaves (who at several times had been taken by *Abdomar*) to rise and attend the *Princess*; and she could not forbear asking the Person who brought her this Command some Questions concerning this Affair, but could learn no more from him, than that *Bellraizia* was of the Royal Blood of *Barbary*, and that for the Love of *Abdomar*, who was also of a high Extraction, tho banish'd for some Misdemeanor, she had forsook her Country, and chose to live a Rover on that uncertain Element, despising all the Dangers of it for his sake. This Information threw the poor *Idalia* into Anxieties much worse than her Captivity had inflicted on her—the Passion she had for *Myrtano*, which her late Frights had silenced for a while, now rous'd it self within her Soul, and told her how happy might she have been, had he been true—how joyfully she could have embraced *Bellraizia*'s Fate, had *Myrtano*, like *Abdomar*, been just. ' Oh had that lovely Youth (cry'd she to herself) ' returned my Passion with ' an equal Ardour, what is it I would not have ' endured—what Dangers could I not have ' dar'd—what Sufferings could I not with Joy ' have

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‘ have borne to keep him mine? Pain would
‘ have been unfelt, Want lose its Sting, and e-
‘ ven Death a Blessing for his sake.—My hum-
‘ ble Wishes aspired no higher than to be wret-
‘ ched with *Myrtano*—yet that, the cruel Hea-
‘ vens deny.—Miserable *Idalia*! where—where
‘ will thy Sorrows end!’ The violent Agita-
tions of her Soul oppress’d her here so strongly,
that, unable to repel their Force, she fell on the
Bed she was sitting on entirely motionless; nor
recover’d she, till being a second time sent for
by *Bellraizia*, and found in that Condition, all
means that could be invented were made use of
for her Relief, and so extremely concerned was
her generous Conqueror, and his admir’d Mi-
stres, that they both join’d in giving her a
thousand Assurances of their Pity, and a Grant
of whatever was in either of their powers, to
remedy the Misfortunes she labour’d under.
‘ If it be Captivity alone that makes you
‘ wretched, said *Bellraizia*, I dare promise you
‘ a Release as well from that Compassion which
‘ is natural to the noble *Abdomar*, as from the
‘ ready Compliance I have ever found in him
‘ to any Request of mine; be therefore com-
‘ forted, for be assured whatever pleasure I
‘ might take in retaining a Person, whose Con-
‘ versation I think so desirable as yours, I would
‘ not for the Universe have my Soul loaded with
‘ the Guilt of rendering you unhappy.’ *Idalia*
answer’d these obliging Expressions in Terms
full of Gratitude, and Respect; and the other
taking an Opportunity of *Abdomar*’s being gone
out of the Cabin on some Business which call’d
him on Deck, entreated her, if it were not too
great a Secret, to relate the Particulars of her
Life.

Life. This was not a Task so easy to be perform'd as she imagin'd, there were some Passages which were an Offence to her Modesty to *remember*, much more to *repeat*; and others, which the Description of would add to her Affliction, by suffering again in *Idea* what she had before in *Reality*. However, the Obligations she had to *Bellraizia*, and the Impossibility there was of denying any thing to a Person who ask'd with so good a Grace, surmounted all these Scruples, and she recounted to her both who she was, how she had been betray'd from her Father's House by the Perfidiousness of *Florez*, the Violence that had been offer'd to her by *Don Ferdinand*, the unhappy Quarrel between him and *Henriquez*, their Deaths, her Passion for *Myrtano*, the Terrors she had endur'd in the Apprehension of a second Violation from him, and afterwards the unknown Person appointed for her Guide; and this last of *Rickamboll*, from which the Victory of *Abdomar* had so fortunately deliver'd her.

THIS Story, had it been told by any other Person, and stript of all those grief-attracting Illustrations which heighten'd each unlucky Accident in *Idalia's* Description, was in itself too moving not to excite the tenderest Compassion in the Soul of her who heard it. *Abdomar* at his return found them both drown'd in Tears; which enquiring the reason of, 'That (*reply'd* 'the Charmer of his Soul) which when you are acquainted with, will very near bring you in- to our Condition; your beautiful Prisoner's Misfortunes.— She has been giving me an Account so full of Wonder, that when you
' hear

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‘ hear it, as with her Leave some other time
‘ you shall, I know you will join in my Belief,
‘ that Heaven designs her for some extraordinary
‘ nary Event.’ The afflicted *Idalia* would have
made some return to these Words, but was too
much overcome by her Disorders, and entreated
the liberty of retiring to the Cabin appointed
for her. The obliging *Bellraizia* would needs
accompany her, and was so assiduous in her
Endeavours to assuage her Sorrows, that the
other, if in *reality* she found no Consolation,
thought herself bound in Gratitude and Com-
plaisance to seem as if she did. As they were
talking, she happen’d to let fall some Words
which discover’d a Desire of knowing the Ad-
ventures of a Lady, whom she esteem’d so in-
finitely happy in the Society of the Man she
lov’d. ‘ ’Tis a general Observation (*said she*)
‘ that those things we place our chief Felicity
‘ in, are the farthest from our reach ; it being
‘ the Sport of adverse Fate, to wound us in the
‘ tenderest Part : but you, Madam, and the no-
‘ ble *Abdomar* are a blest Exception to that
‘ Rule, and having all in one another, can
‘ know no second Wish.’ ‘ ’Tis true, *reply’d*
‘ *Bellraizia*, we are at last as happy as Love can
‘ make us ; but did you know the Toils, the
‘ Dangers, the Endurings we have had——
‘ the unintermitting Cares, incessant Fears, and
‘ little Hopes, which, in the Race of Passion,
‘ both accompany’d, you’d be surpriz’d that
‘ either of us liv’d to reach the *Goal* : and be-
‘ cause I know not but it may alleviate a De-
‘ spair I see is beginning to take root in you, to
‘ hear that there are no Misfortunes so great
‘ but Heaven can relieve us from ; I shall, if
‘ you

‘ you desire it, let you into the most secret History of mine.’ *Idalia* immediately told her there was not a Possibility of her conferring a greater Obligation—that it was a Favour she had been ambitious of since the first Moment she was brought before her;—and that having now so favourable an Opportunity of their being alone, begg’d she would make use of it for that purpose. To which *Bellraizia* willingly complying, began to entertain her with what she desired, in this manner.

The History of Abdomar and Bellraizia.

IN the little time, *said she*, you have been in our Ship, you may, perhaps, have heard of what Country I am a Native, and doubtless are surpriz’d to see my Complexion so different from others born in the same Climate; but to ease you of that Wonder, I must let you know the first of my Family that settled in *Barbary* was a Renegado Christian, a *Florentine*, nearly ally’d to the great Duke of *Tuscany*, and General of his Forces; who, quitting his Service on some Disgust, brought his Family to *Barbary*, renounc’d his Religion, and was promoted. A sudden War breaking out, he signaliz’d himself by many remarkable Actions, and at his return was made Governour of a Province, in which Post he dy’d. Great Revolutions afterwards happening, a Son of his was advanc’d to the Dignity of *Bassaw*; and in length of Time, and, to them, an auspicious Turn of Fortune, a Descendant of his to the *Crown*, under an annual Tri-

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Tribute to the Emperor of *Morocco*: my Father's Brother is at present King, and the fifth Monarch of our Race. I make you not this Relation as a Boast of my Pedigree, but as it is necessary to render other Occurrences plain to your Observation: for had my Birth been meaner, my Lot had been more blest; Grandeur has only given me an adequate Portion of Inquietudes, and Fate, by placing me in so elevated a State, had no other design in it, than to make me more remarkably unhappy. My Uncle having but one Daughter, oblig'd my Father to let me be bred with her at Court, for a Companion in all her Diversions, and with our Years there grew so tender a Friendship between us, as is very rarely to be found in Persons of the same Sex; neither of us had a desire, tho never so violent, that we could not resign for the Gratification of the other: If Joy, or Sorrow, sat on the Face of *either*, you might be certain to find it in the other's also. Thus, blest with that Tranquillity which is always inseparable to those who are possess'd of Innocence and Freedom, did we live, till *Love*!—that sweet destructive Passion! that luscious Poisoner of the Calm of Life, chang'd that felicitous State, for Cares, Inquietudes, and unceasing Perturbations.

THE King of *Fez* had a Son esteem'd the Wonder of his Age; his Martial Exploits had justly made him famous over all that Quarter of the World; nor was his soft Address, and elegant Behaviour, less charming to his Friends, than his undaunted Fierceness was dreadful to his Enemies.—— I know not what ill Star

inclin'd him to make a Visit at our Court ; but he had no sooner arriv'd there, and cast his Eyes on me, than he became enamour'd. I, who at that time had a Heart entirely unpossess'd, and was not without some share of that Vanity by which most of our Sex, more or less, are sway'd, could not listen to the Declarations he made me, without an adequate Proportion of Pride and Pleasure, for being capable of inspiring a Prince so every way agreeable, with a Passion such as he profess'd. My Uncle, who truly lov'd me, extreamly approv'd of the Proposals he made, and my Father thought himself so much honour'd by them, that he laid the strictest Command on me, to treat *Mulzedon*, for that was his Name, as a Prince, to whose Professions of Love I was infinitely oblig'd. Never was Lover indulg'd, on all sides, with so many Opportunities of expressing his Passion, yet was he not contented : He was always complaining, that not all the Solicitations he made were effectual to inspire me with Sentiments such as he wish'd.— He tormented himself with a Belief, that the Defe-
rence I paid him, was wholly owing to his Quality, and the Commands my Uncle and Father had given me.— He never saw me without telling me he found it impossible to make me love him ; but one day he seem'd so uneasy, and indeed so desperate at my Insensibility, as he call'd it, that I thought he was distracted. For my part, I believ'd I lov'd him ; I had never seen a Man whose Merits I could think equal to those he was Master of :—was perfectly pleas'd when in his Company, and on the strictest Examination into my own Heart,
could

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could find in it, not the least Scruple at becoming his Wife ; which Title I had consented to wear, as soon as the necessary Preparations to confer it on me could be got ready.— I did not fail to acquaint him with the most favourable of my Inclinations ; but all I could say, was insufficient to give him the Consolation I wish'd.— He still accus'd me of Coldness. Nor indeed is it to be wonder'd at, that he did so : For, alas ! he perceiv'd nothing in me of those tender Languors—those melting Softnesses—those pleasing Pains—those thrilling Ardors—those mingled Hopes, and Fears, which still accompany Desire, and are never at an end, till sure Possession cuts them off—those Thousand, Thousand, nameless Consequences of eager Passion, which he felt, and could easily distinguish, and which I since have too powerfully experienc'd.—But at that time, I was utterly ignorant what it was he meant when e'er he nam'd them to me, and began to think him unreasonable to ask greater Proofs of my Affection, than what I imagin'd was in the power of any Woman to give.—Perceiving I grew angry at these kind of Discourses, he at length forbore them ; but in doing so, put so great a Constraint on his Inclinations, as, could I have had any notion of what I now am certain he suffer'd, would have made me endure almost as much thro *Pity*, as he did from an Agitation more violent. But not to tire you with the Particulars of our Behaviour till the Day appointed for the Celebration of our Nuptials was arriv'd, which had not been so long delay'd, but for the expected coming of a young Nobleman of *Fez* ; one who from his Infancy

had been brought up with *Mulyzeden*, as I had with the Princess my Cousin, and so firmly united were they in Friendship, that fearing *Marriage* might some time or other occasion a *Slack'ning*, if not a total *Breach* of that Bond which both desir'd should be *indissoluble*, each had taken an Oath never to wed but with the Approbation of the other. *Mulyzeden* had so sacred a Regard to his Promise in this Affair, that as soon as he had obtain'd mine, and my Parents Consent to make me his, he dispatch'd a Messenger to *Fez* with an account of the Progress he had made, and entreating the Presence of this dear *Favourite*. The other was not neglectful of the Duty he ow'd to his Prince and Friend, but set out for *Barbary* the moment he was recover'd of some slight Wounds, which had been the cause of his staying behind him; as to avoid marrying a Lady whom his Father had provided for him, was of *Mulyzeden's* coming away. It was Evening when he came to Court, and being engag'd with the Princess, I saw him not that Night. I had observ'd an unusual Melancholy in that young Princess; but she complaining of a little Indisposition in her Head, made me impute it to that, and prevented my taking so much notice of it as otherwise I should have done; but the News of the Prince's Favourite's Arrival being blaz'd about the Court, she sent for me immediately. I found her on the Bed in such an Agony of Grief, that I should but lessen it in an endeavour to represent it.— It was a good while before she was able to speak to me, tho she attempted it several times, and it was with the utmost Difficulty she at last brought out these

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these Words:—— ‘Pity me! pity me *Bell-raizia*! —— Dearest Cousin! pity me.’—— She would have proceeded, but the struggling Passions of her Soul stopp’d her Utterance, and Sighs, accompany’d with a Torrent of Tears, had alone the power of informing me she labour’d under some very great Affliction. The Surprize I was in to see her in this manner, did not hinder me from endeavouring to console her; but when I entreated her to reveal what ’twas disturb’d her, she seem’d possess’d with an Addition of Disquiet, ‘Press me no more, (said she, with a Countenance which, without the help of Words, sufficiently express’d the Distress of her Soul) the Misfortune I am fallen under, nor Earth, nor Heaven can relieve me from.— Why then should I afflict you with the Knowledge of it?’ The Accent in which she spoke this, touch’d me to the Heart; I tenderly lov’d her, and could not bear to see her thus, and be ignorant of the Cause: I fell on my Knees by the Bedside, and kissing her Hand, and bathing it in my Tears, which now fell fast as her’s, conjur’d her by all the Friendship she had favour’d me with, to let me into the cruel Secret of her Sorrows.—— ‘I cannot—— must not—— dare not tell you, answer’d she.’ ‘O Heavens! interrupted I, what can have happen’d to *Zatilda* (for that was her Name) that *Bellraizia* must not know? Nay, (continu’d I) I think you said you dare not speak it——and I have just Cause to fear you doubt my Truth, if longer you refuse to give me leave to join with you in your Complaints.’ ‘No, no (resum’d she hastily) you have no cause to mourn—Fate is about to give you
C 3 all

' all you can desire; therefore I'll not detain
 ' you from the dear Presence of the Prince who
 ' adores you, and whom justly you esteem:—
 ' I sent for you, but to take my last Farewell,
 ' for be assur'd I'll not out-live this Night.
 ' No, (*pursued she, raising her Eyes to Heaven, as*
 ' *tho' she meant to accuse the Gods for her Misfor-*
 ' *tures*) no, I ne'er will live to see to-morrow's
 ' hated Dawn—this Night shall put an end to
 ' curs'd *Zatilda's* Misery and Shame.' It would
 be impossible for me to express either my Con-
 fusion at the first part of her Discourse, or the
 Agonies I felt at the Resolution which she
 clos'd it with—The sudden Tremblings which
 seiz'd her, and the visible Alteration in her
 Countenance when she nam'd the *Prince*, gave
 me some little faint *Idea* that it was he who had
 been so fatal to her Repose, and in so surprizing
 a Juncture was not Mistress of Presence enough
 of Mind to be able to resolve in what manner
 I should reply.—— While I was pausing, she
 had been endeavouring to recollect herself, and
 perhaps believing she had said too much, was
 willing to break off any farther Conversation.—
 ' I see, *cry'd she*, I see (with an Infinity of Con-
 ' cern for having occasion'd it) how nearly the
 ' Despair you find me in has touch'd you. Par-
 ' don it, I beseech you, my dear *Bellraixia*!
 ' 'tis the last Trouble you will ever receive
 ' from the unfortunate *Zatilda*.—— ' Remem-
 ' ber me, I conjure you (*added she, tenderly*
 ' *pressing my Hand*;) and when you are possess'd
 ' of all your Soul is fond of in *Mulyzedon's*
 ' Court, think he cannot love you more than I
 ' have done.'—— And then (perceiving I was
 silent, for indeed I had not yet the power of
 Speech,

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Speech, so much had Amazement lock'd up all my Senses) 'Go (*continu'd she*) I will no longer afflict you with the sight of Woe it is not in your power to remedy: Go! go, and be blest with *Mulyzedén*.' The Hesitation with which she still pronounc'd that Name, confirm'd me that my Conjectures had but too real a Foundation; and at last getting leave from the Whirl of Thought which that Belief had at the first involv'd me in, 'It is not in Nature (*answer'd I*) for *Bellraizia* to know what Felicity is, when *Zatilda* refuses to be Partaker of it; that *Prince* you speak of, deserving as he is, had never the power to rival you in my Affections——nor shall my Uncle, my Father, his ardent Passion, or my own Vow oblige me to become his Wife, if you approve not of it.' She would by some faint Arguments have persuaded me to believe there was nothing she more desir'd, than to see me Princess of *Fez*; but she was so little accusom'd to Hypocrisy, that I easily distinguish'd her *Heart* was far from assenting to what her *Tongue* had uttered, and that all the Pains she took, was but to disguise a Truth her Modesty could not suffer her to wish disclos'd. But I, who was not able to bear to see, much less to leave her in this Anxiety, press'd her so home, that at length I wrested the Secret from her Breast, and found it as I imagin'd. I had several Messages from *Mulyzedén*, while I was employ'd in comforting her, to let me know, that his long-expected Friend was now arriv'd, and that they both waited at my Apartment; but I still sent Excuses, and at last a plain Denial, that I would not be seen that Night. The *King* being told of his Daughter's

ter's Indisposition, came also into her Chamber; and seeing me there, told me the Prince of *Fez* depended on the Performance of my Promise of marrying him the next day: To which I answer'd, That with his Majesty's Permission, I would defer it till the Princess *Zatilda* should be enough recovered to be Witness of the Ceremony. He seem'd oblig'd to the Concern I express'd for her, and told me, that if my Father and the Prince would be so content, he would not oppose what I desir'd. *Zatilda* look'd on me while I was speaking in this manner to her Father, with a Mixture of Astonishment and Joy, but durst not express any part of what she thought before him, lest the Secret should be as liable to his Suspicion, as she knew it had been to mine: But the Moment he had left the Room, demanded of me impatiently what it was I meant, by requesting to delay the Marriage. 'I mean, *said I*, by protracting to shift it off entirely.' — 'How! (*cry'd she, with a Voice which express'd the highest Transport*) is it then possible you do not love him?' 'Not half enough to make you unhappy (*reply'd I*.)' To repeat the thousand Acknowledgments, the Kisses, the Embraces she gave me at this Declaration, would but tire you; it shall suffice to say, the Night was taken up with them, and the Study what Means should be made use of to disappoint *Mulyzedon* of his Hopes of me, and turn the Course of his Affections where they were with more Zeal desir'd. We had a thousand Inventions, but none seem'd plausible enough to be approv'd, and the enamour'd Princess was oblig'd to content herself with the repeated Assurances

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surances that neither Force nor Entreaty should prevail on me to make her miserable by my yielding to be his Wife, and leave to Time and Chance to work for her, in changing the Sentiments he had for me to her Advantage.

WHEN Morning came, I left her in a much better Condition of Repose than that in which I had found her, and retired to my own Apartment not a little satisfy'd to have an Opportunity of reflecting on what I had done. The Advantage I propos'd to myself in being the Wife of a Prince so accomplish'd as *Mulyzeden*, was too great for me to think of quitting, without some Concern; and the Promise which my Love to *Zatilda* had oblig'd me to make her of doing so, I foresaw would be very difficult for me to make good: I very well knew that my Father would fly into the utmost Extremity of Rage against me, when once he should find an Intention in me to oppose his Inclinations. Besides, I could not help having some little Commiseration for a Prince who lov'd me with so high a Degree of Passion, that the loss of me might probably deprive him of his Life. As I was revolving on this manner, my Page brought me word he waited for Admittance; I was sensible he must have heard of the Petition I had made the King the Night before, for delaying the Nuptials till *Zatilda's* Recovery, and expected he would reproach the little Regard I show'd for him, with as much Vehemence as his Respect would give him leave: But as *that* would be the most plausible, nay, indeed, the *only* Pretence I could make, I resolv'd to have recourse to no other. I found I was not mistaken; the Moment he

en-

enter'd the Room, I read in his Eyes the Discontent of his Soul; and tho he approach'd me with the most perfect Humility, yet there was something in his Air which told me, before he spoke, that he thought himself ill treated. I had little to say in vindication of what I had done, since if I had really been possess'd of that Warmth of Passion he had endeavour'd to inspire, and which I had often feign'd to make him easy, no Consideration would have been of force to have engag'd me to break the Promise I had made of being his, the very Moment that his Friend was arrived. Besides, the *Princess's* Indisposition was look'd upon so slight, that (as Lovers are always industrious to torment themselves) he imagined it was by my Desire she only counterfeited it, on purpose to give me an Excuse for delaying what I had no Inclination to perform. He express'd himself on this Head in Terms so moving, and complain'd of my Indifference, and the cruel Pleasure I took in making him unhappy, that tho I was farther from a Passion for him, than, till I knew what 'twas to *love* in reality, I was sensible of myself; yet I had a Softness in my Soul which gave me Agonies inexpressible, for being oblig'd by so severe a Necessity to reduce him to such Despair: but to palliate the Matter as well as I could, I told him, as he was not ignorant of the Friendship which was between my *Cousin* and myself, he ought not to wonder I deny'd to receive what Fortune's Smiles would bestow on me, while she was unable to taste any Joy—I assur'd him she was in a much worse Condition than was generally believ'd; and finding nothing else would be of force to persuade him

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to Moderation, was oblig'd to renew the Vows I had before made him, of being his for ever, as soon as she was restor'd to her former Health. Unhappy *Prince* ! he little suspected the Equivocation of these Words, which when I spoke, I knew wou'd be but little to his advantage, for I resolv'd she should continue to feign herself as she was till something should happen to give a Turn to this Affair : He appeared a little more satisfied than he had been, however, and when he was so, told me, the young Nobleman being now arriv'd, attended my Permission to kiss my Hands. I, who had as much Curiosity to see a Person I had heard so much of, as the Chagrin I was in would allow room for, desir'd he might be immediately introduc'd. — But, Oh Gods ! with what Emotions did my Bosom swell when first I cast my Eyes upon him ! — I will not go about to represent what 'twas I felt — 'twould be impossible — But you, lovely *Idalia* ! who have so much experienced what Passion is, may guess. — Besides, in my fond Judgment, whoever has seen the graceful Form of *Abdomar*, for it was no other, cannot be surpriz'd to hear the Effect it wrought on me. How mean, methought, did *Mulyzedon* seem ! How little in comparison with his charming Friend ! The Disorder I had been in, while talking to the Prince, serv'd to screen that additional one which seiz'd me at the Sight of the adorable Stranger, from the Observation of them both ; for the former took it for no other than what was occasioned by Reflection on what had been said to me ; and the latter, as he has since told me, for a Look that was natural to me ; he found enough in it, however, to think agreeable : And

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'tis certain, that at this first View, the God of soft Desires fix'd his Arrows in both our Hearts at once : But, alas ! I was not so happy to imagine I had made any Impression on him, and Love was scarce a Moment older than *Despair*.— It was now that I began to pity poor *Zatilda's* Case, for having entertain'd a Passion for a *Prince*, who seem'd so little in a Capacity of returning it, much more than was in my power to do, before I felt the same. It is not to be exprest, it is not to be imagin'd, what I endur'd while they were present : but (much for my Ease, who long'd for an Opportunity of indulging the new Sentiments I was possess'd with) they stay'd not long, perhaps thinking a Morning Visit might be troublesome, especially to a Person who, that they might do so, had informed them she took but little Repose the Night before. But, oh ! how little do they know their Passion's Force, who think to conquer it, by reflecting on the Difficulties that are likely to oppose it!— All that might be inflicted on me from the Indignation of my Royal Uncle, my Father, or the just Resentment of the injured *Mulyzedon*, seem'd light to me, if by my Sufferings I cou'd purchase the least Share in his Affections, who was now dearer to me than the whole World besides. — But the most, and indeed the *only* dreadful Consideration, was, that should he ever guess at the Inclinations I had for him, he would be so far from thinking himself obliged to them, that he would rather hate me for the Ingratitude I was guilty of to a *Prince* he so infinitely loved. I thought my self now in a much worse Condition than *Zatilda* was, because I had not only the Weight of my
own

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own Troubles to support, but was also loaded with those my ill Fate oblig'd me to inflict on *Mulyzeden*, whom tho' it was not my Destiny to love, I could not but have a very tender Regard for. And sure, never was a Soul so torn as mine. I saw the two Persons, for whom I had the greatest Friendship, about to be reduced to the last degree of Misery on my account ; the one because I did not love him, and the other because I was beloved : while I my self vainly struggled with the Violence of a Passion which I had then no more Hopes of being successful in, than I had of being able to overcome it. Confus'd and wild, with these different Agitations, my Brain grew giddy, and Apprehension such a Torment, that I cou'd no longer bear it : I flew to *Zatilda's* Apartment, and found some little Ease in pouring out my Discontents on the Bosom of that faithful Friend. She, who besides the Kindness she ever had for me, thought herself so infinitely oblig'd to me, for the Promise I had made of resigning my Right in *Mulyzeden* to her, did all she cou'd to give me Consolation ; but tho' she truly commiserated my unhappy State, yet I cou'd easily perceive she was not so much dissatisfied, as she pretended, at the relation I made her how much I was influenc'd by the Charms of *Abdomar*. Nor indeed was it natural to believe she shou'd, since this new Passion was a more convincing Assurance that I would never be the Wife of *Mulyzeden*, than all the Vows I had made. It afforded however but a very small Portion of Contentment to either of us to know we were not Rivals in the same Affections, since such indissoluble Difficulties appeared to oppose both our Wishes, as left

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us not the least room to hope either would be able to obtain them.

FOR several Days, *Zatilda*, as we had agreed, still keeping her Chamber, her Indisposition was a tolerable Excuse for my putting off the Nuptials; but the Physicians appointed to attend her, giving in their Verdict that she was in reality afflicted with no other Disease than Melancholy, not only my Father, and *Mulyzeden*, who, for different Reasons, had all this while been sufficiently impatient, but also the King began to exert his Authority, and told me that neither his Daughter's, nor my own ill Humour, shou'd any longer be a Pretence for affronting a Prince, whose Alliance was an Honour to all our Family. Judge what a Blow this was, — what a Crush to our Resolutions! — *Zatilda*, as soon as she was informed of it, cry'd out, 'I am undone — In spite of all you have promised me, in spite of your own distant Inclinations, you will be forc'd to be the Prince's Wife'. I was no less distracted, for Death wou'd now have been less dreadful to me than *Mulyzeden*'s Bed; yet by what Means I should avoid it, without a plain Denial, and boldly daring the Rage of all those who had the Power over me, I could not for the Soul of me imagine: But *Passion*, when it is violent like mine, is never unaccompany'd by *Courage*; I resolv'd rather to defy all Dangers, than yield to an Embrace which the *Idea* of was now grown odious, or make my dear *Zatilda* wretched, by utterly depriving her of even a Possibility of ever being otherwise. We pass'd our Hours for the most part together, not only because to talk of our mutual

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mutual Misfortunes was all the Consolation that either of us enjoy'd, but also because I wou'd avoid the Presence of *Mulyzeden* as much as possible. Not but he sometimes visited her, but then he always sent to desire to know if he might have Permission, and I took care to retire into another Room, and by that means escap'd the Persecution it was to me to hear his Complaints. This I did so often, and he being told by some of the Attendants that I was there, tho he had not the liberty of seeing me, that one day he took an effectual Method to prevent me from concealing myself as I had done, without being guilty of a Rudeness unbecoming my Character.—— He sent a Gentleman with his Duty to the two Princesses, who he knew were together, entreating the favour of them to continue so, and allow of his Presence, having something to communicate to them both.——

My Cousin and I look'd on one another while this Message was delivering, with a good deal of Surprize; but it being her place to answer, she did in these Words: 'Let your *Prince* know, *said she*, that I should take it ill, if he should have so indifferent an Opinion of my Judgment, as not to assure himself of Welcome here, whenever he has a Leisure Hour to afford us his Conversation—As for my *Cousin*, he is doubtless satisfy'd in her Inclinations—Madam (*interrupted I, affecting a gay Air*) if he is not, I know of no Person on Earth so proper to complain to as yourself, who, on all Occasions, are so much his Friend.' I spoke this, because I knew that tho' he extremely respected her before, yet, since my deferring the Marriage, he had conceiv'd a secret Spite against her, as imagining, tho' for what reason he could not

not dive into, she had been the Cause. And then addressing my self to the Person he had sent, told him he might inform his Master, he had seen me with the *Princess*, where I design'd to remain some time, and should be very well pleased if he would come and join Company with us ; which he assuring us he would do, immediately, withdrew.

BOTH *Zatilda* and my self were of Opinion, that the Business he had to communicate was no other than the old Story of my Unkindness, and growing more presuming, on the part which the *King* seem'd to take in his Interest, sent in this particular manner on purpose to oblige me to give him Audience, which of late, as I have already told you, I had avoided as much as possible : *Zatilda* was beginning to consider in what manner she should answer him, in case he should desire her, as she imagin'd he wou'd, to interest herself in this Affair, when he enter'd the Room. After the first Civilities were over, ' Madam ! said she to me, I have Reason to believe that Fortune having began her Persecutions to me in your cruel Coldness, designs, to continue them in depriving me of every thing which cou'd afford me Consolation. *Abdomar*, that Friend, whom next to the adorable *Bellraiz* had the greatest Share in my Heart, of late avoids my Presence, shuns my Caresses, and, when I ask the Cause, replies not but with Sighs. This Morning, pressing with all the Earnestness of Friendship, to which I joyn'd Commands, to know what had occasion'd this so sudden Change, after a thousand Evasions, which he found were vain, he told me, with an
' Ac-

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'Accent which spoke at once Despair, and Grief, and Horror, his *Life* was mine, but not his *Secrets*.' I thought this Answer as far from *Justice*, as it was from *Kindness*, and let him know I had not been guilty of those Reserves to him; which, between Souls united as I had believ'd our's, were treasonable to the Laws of Friendship. Our Tempers, both too liable to Passion, a few hot Words inflam'd, and he departed from my Chamber. This Usage, tho' it much troubles me, I cou'd forgive from *Abdomar*, but he it seems is not so reconcileable. About an Hour since he sent a Letter by his *Page*, which please to judge his Meaning of. In speaking these Words, he deliver'd me the Paper, which at his desire I read aloud; the Contents of it struck me too deeply not to be fix'd in my Remembrance, and were in this manner.

TO PRINCE MULYZEDEN.

M*Y* Presence being no way serviceable to you in Barbary, and the Repose of my future Life calling me with the utmost Expedition to Fez, I humbly entreat your Permission to return thither. I know better what is owing to my Duty, and the Obligations you have heaped upon me, than to oppose your Will; but hope the same Goodness, to which I already stand so far engaged, will influence you not to command my Stay, since my immediate Departure is absolutely necessary to prevent me from being

The most miserable of your Slaves,

ABDOMAR.

PART II.

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THE

THE Concern which this unexpected Shock gave me, and which it was impossible for me wholly to conceal, was not a little obliging to the unsuspecting *Mulyzeden*, who imagin'd it sprung only on his Account ; especially when I told him, that I thought it the highest Piece of Ingratitude imaginable, and that he would be blam'd by the whole World for his too great Condescension, if he granted the Request he made. ' What, *said I*, has he found so disobliging in the Court of *Barbary* that should make him impatient to remove from it ? Or what Engagements can he have left behind him in *Fez* equal to those he has to his Prince, who has bought his utmost Services at a Price so noble as his Friendship ?' *Zatilda* join'd in all I said on this Score ; but *Mulyzeden*, who, in spite of his Resentment, had the most tender Friendship for him imaginable, tho' he cou'd not but approve of our Reasons, cou'd not be influenced by them so far as to force his Stay, if Persuasions wou'd not win him. After a long Conversation he told me, he had a Favour to entreat of me, the Grant of which wou'd infinitely oblige him, which having assur'd him I would, if in my power ; he inform'd me, that he believ'd it would not be improper if I seem'd a little interested in this Affair, and took upon me to enquire of *Abdomar* the Reasons of his desiring to leave us. ' Perhaps, *said he*, his Complaisance for a Princess of your Accomplishments may influence him to reveal more than I have been able to draw from him'. You may believe I did not hesitate much to promise what he desir'd : I was not a little satisfy'd to have an Oppor-

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Opportunity of conversing so freely with *Abdomar*, and beginning to know what Jealousy inflicts, fancying it cou'd be no other Reason than the Calls of Love, which made him regardless of every thing beside, presently flatter'd my self with a secret Hope I should be able to discover something by his Words or Gestures which wou'd give me Colour for opposing his Return. — I granted the Request which *Mulyzedon* made me with a Willingness which seem'd to banish part of his Chagrin, and telling me he would send no Answer to *Abdomar* till I had first spoke to him, took his leave with a Satisfaction much greater than I had seen in his Countenance since the Time of my first putting off the Marriage. But when his Absence had given me an Opportunity, how did I indulge Despair and Jealousy? How did I reproach *Zatilda* for accusing her ill Fate, since my own appear'd by such infinite degrees more dreadful: tho', as every one looks on their own Misfortunes through a magnifying Glass, she could not be brought to yield me the Pre-eminence. Good part of the Night was past in this kind of Conversation, and the remainder in contemplating on the Intricacy of this Affair, which, indeed, from the Beginning, promis'd nothing but Confusion. For my part, it had been many Nights since I knew what it was to sleep in Tranquillity, but having this added to my other Disquiets, of losing, in all Probability, forever, the Sight of all I wish'd to look on, fill'd me with such mortal Agonies, as the most elegant Description of, wou'd make appear but mean in comparison of what in reality they were. Tir'd with my uneasy Bed, I rose much

earlier than was my Custom, and because I wou'd avoid the Morning Salutations which the Court thought it their Duty to pay me, and which, with all other Formalities of State, were now grown troublesome, I went into the Palace Garden without any Attendants, leaving Orders with them not to tell Prince *Mulyzeden*, my Father, or any other Person where I was. It was not a Time for the Walks to be frequented, and I rambled up and down, without being accosted by any one, till growing a little weary, I went into a Grotto which was order'd so as to have many little Apartments in it, which run winding one out of another like a Labyrinth, and might contain several Companies without being known by each other to be there. I was scarce set down before I heard a murmuring Sound of Voices, that seem'd earnest in Discourse; but whose they were, or what was the Subject of their Conversation, I was not able to distinguish. It is impossible for any one to be less inquisitive into the Affairs of others than I am at all times, but especially then, when I was so much taken up, and perplex'd with my own. I sat for some Moments without so much as a Thought what they might be, till one of them raising his Voice somewhat higher than he had done, I heard the Name of *Abdomar* repeated. That Sound indeed was sufficient to rouse me from a Lethargy, had I been in one: I left the Place I was in, and drawing nearer as softly as I cou'd, soon found it was no other than he, whom Prince *Mulyzeden* had drawn thither on purpose to engage him to disclose the Secret he had been so desirous of knowing; for presently I heard him speak these Words: ' Say no more,
Abdomar,

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Abdomar, (*said he*) say no more ! I am now
convinced that all the Friendship thou ever
pretendest to me, was but to flatter me. —
The Names of Prince, Patron, Friend, but
Words of course, and had no other Meaning
than to please me with the Sound.' 'Sir, I
conjure you, do not rend my Soul, *reply'd* *Ab-*
domar, with such unjust Suspensions ; by Hea-
ven, by all that we adore above, or love below,
your Friendship is the only Pride, the only
Joy, the only Hope, I have on Earth ; and
when I forfeit that, I must be curst beyond
my Enemy's extremest Malice'. 'Why then,
resumed the Prince, dost thou conceal this
Secret from me ? No, I never will believe
thou lovest me till I obtain this Proof. —
I know too well thy honest, generous Nature
to imagine it can be ought thou would'st be
asham'd to own ; but if it were, to me thou
mightest disclose it. — Humanity is lia-
ble to Failings, and if some stealing Vice has
unawares crept into thy unguarded Wishes, I
shall not censure it with such Severity as thou
thy self wouldst do, having far more, and
greater of my own'. — 'Oh, Sir, forbear,
cry'd the other, you are too God-like good —
your wond'rous Condescension to an unwor-
thy Slave makes me more hateful to my self. —
Believe it, my most honour'd Prince, the
Crime you would discover, is of so black a
kind, you cou'd not know it without Detesta-
tion : This once favoured *Abdomar* by you
and by all Mankind must be contemn'd, ab-
horr'd, and if there were a Punishment more
terrible, that, that wou'd be inflicted on me'.
'Thy Words, *interrupted* Mulyzedon, amazing

' as they are, can never make me think thou
 ' couldst be guilty of a Crime I cou'd not par-
 ' don. Hadst thou conspir'd against my Life,
 ' half this Penitence would more than wash
 ' the Stain — But I will no farther press
 ' thee, keep still the Secret in thy burthen'd
 ' Breast, but let me keep thee with me : Do
 ' not leave me, and I will ask no more.' ' O
 ' unjust Gods ! (*cry'd Abdomar, in a Voice that*
 ' *testified the utmost Horror*) why am I made
 ' this Wretch ? — Why doom'd to bear more
 ' than a mortal Sufferance can sustain ? —
 ' Why am I forc'd, against my Inclinations,
 ' to wrong such Royal Goodness ? —
 ' Strike, strike me dead with your avenging
 ' Thunders—Lightnings blast me—Earth open
 ' wide, and swallow me at once.—Snatch,
 ' snatch me, Feinds, and bear me quick to Hell—
 ' There's not a Devil there so damn'd as I —
 ' But hold, *continued he*, these Coward-like
 ' Complaints avail not to erase my foul Ingra-
 ' titude, my horrid Perjury. — I have the
 ' Means myself to end my Tortures, and cha-
 ' stise my Crimes. Thus, thus, my Prince, I
 ' will revenge you on your worst of Foes'.

WITH these Words, as I was afterwards
 inform'd, he drew a Dagger from his Side, and
 was about to plunge it in his Breast ; but *Muly-*
zedem, who, by the Beginning of those Excla-
 mations, guess'd they would not cease without
 some Act of Desperation, was quick enough to
 prevent him ; and wresting from him the fatal
 Weapon, spoke, in a low and melancholy Ac-
 cent, yet loud enough for me to understand
 what he said, in this manner : ' It is enough,
 ' *Abdomar,*

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‘ *Abdomar*, it is enough, I need no more to make
‘ me guess at your Misfortune. ——— I am
‘ too well assur’d of your Honour to believe
‘ you would injure a *Prince* who loves you, by
‘ any Act in which your *Will* had part. — No,
‘ no, the Crime which has occasion’d this Despair,
‘ is an involuntary one. — There are no Rules,
‘ alas! to limit *Love*, and I must learn to be in-
‘ sensible of *Bellraizia*’s Charms myself, before I
‘ refuse my Pity to another, who has felt their
‘ Influence.’ ‘Tho’ I listen’d with all the Atten-
‘ tion I was able, I cou’d not hear one Word af-
‘ ter this for the space of several Minutes; and
‘ when I did, it was in such broken Sentences,
‘ that had I not heard the *beginning* of their Con-
‘ versation, I cou’d have form’d no positive Judg-
‘ ment to what the *latter* part of it tended, till
‘ *Mulyzedon*, who I found was about to leave
‘ him, spoke as he went out of the Grotto in this
‘ manner: ‘ Well, *Abdomar*, said he, I shall no
‘ more disturb you in the Enjoyment of a So-
‘ litude which you prefer to the Society of
‘ a Prince who loves you; only remember this,
‘ that there is a mighty Difference between
‘ Crimes enforced by a compulsive Fate, and
‘ those which we are guilty of meerly thro’ the
‘ Obstinacy of our own Will: The unhappy
‘ *Passion* you lament, is not your *Fault*, but
‘ your *Misfortune*; but if you offer to lay vio-
‘ lent Hands on your own Life, you not only
‘ anticipate the Decrees of Heaven, but injure
‘ me in the most tender part, by depriving me
‘ of a Subject I esteem the most capable of ser-
‘ ving me, and commit a Sin unpardonable both
‘ by the Gods and me’. By good luck for me,
‘ who should have been strangely confus’d, had ei-

ther the *Prince* or *Abdomar* known I had been Witness of this Discourse ; the former went from the *Grotto* through another Passage, which led to a lower Garden, leaving that I was in intirely free for me to retire, which I did, with all the expedition I could, fearing lest *Abdomar*, who I found still continued where he was, should come out hastily and discover me : I walk'd a turn or two in a fine green Alley adjoining to it, ruminating on what had past. — I cannot but say, it was with an Infinity of Transport that I was eas'd of those Rackings of Jealously which I had endured since I heard of his Impatience to return to *Fez*, and that, so contrary to my Hopes and Expectations, he felt the same tumultuous Emotions which Desire creates, as had invaded me from the first moment *Mulyzedan* brought him to my Presence : but then the Goodness, the Generosity of that unhappy *Prince*, injur'd by those in whom he most confided, reproached me with Ingratitude and Falshood : The Sense of his Sufferings so truly touched me, that methought I could have done a Violence to my *own* Passion to have made him happy. — But then my Friendship to *Zatilda*, or I fancy'd it was that (because I was ashamed to own even to myself that *Love* had so far influenc'd me) which check'd the Growth of such an Inclination before I scarce could feel it rising in me. But to which of these two Motives it was my future Behaviour was owing, I will leave *Idalia* to the Liberty of judging.

I had not long indulg'd my Meditations, before I saw close by me the Person who took up the greatest part of them : The half-distracted
Abdomar,

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Abdomar, with Head declin'd, and folded Arms, had left the *Grotto*, and was coming down the Walk in which I was ; the Confusion of both our Thoughts had prevented us from seeing one another till we were very near. The Start he gave at discovering me, sufficiently assured me he met me not with design, as did his offering, after he had made me a low Bow, to turn away into another Walk : But my *Love* inspir'd me at that time with a Boldness which I have a thousand times since wondered at ; and presently remembring the Request *Mulyzeden* had made me the Day before, resolved to make that my Excuse for entertaining the Man, for a Moment of whose Conversation I could almost have hazarded my Life : And calling after him— ' My Lord, said I, you do very wisely in shunning the Presence of a Princess you are about so highly to disoblige.' ' How ! Madam (cry'd the surpriz'd *Abdomar*, endeavouring as much as possible to throw off his Chagrin) were there a Possibility of my being guilty of a Crime like that, I should deserve far worse than is in the power of a Goodness so divine as yours to inflict—but since you have tax'd me with it, permit me to entreat the Cause.' ' The Cause is plain (resum'd I, counterfeiting a Gayety which was far from my Humour) if Prince *Mulyzeden* has not wrong'd you in his Report, you grow weary of us, and are impatient to return to *Fez*.' ' The short time I have been here (reply'd he, gravely) has shown me so much to admire, that if there were a perfect Heaven to be found on Earth, it is in the Court of *Barbary* I should seek it ; and 'tis so much my Misfortune, that I am oblig'd by an in-

dis-

' dispensible Necessity to leave it, that I much
 ' doubt it never will be in my power to erase
 ' the Melancholy it occasions.' ' Did you in
 ' reality *think* (*said I*) what your Complaisance
 ' obliges you to *say*, no Considerations would
 ' be of force to take you from a Prince who
 ' cannot be happy when you are not with him.'
 Abdomar did not immediately make any Answer
 to these Words; and I, who strictly observ'd
 all his Motions, perceiv'd this Pause was occa-
 sioned by the Suppression of some Sighs which,
 endeavouring to vent themselves, had well nigh
 suffocated him; but having at last got the Vic-
 tory over them, ' I am so little capable of being
 ' serviceable to my Prince, Madam! (*said he*)
 ' on any Score, that without being guilty of an
 ' Injustice to himself, he cannot regret my Ab-
 ' sence—tho if it were otherwise, he will soon
 ' be put in possession of a Blessing which will
 ' leave no room for any second Wish: Whate'er
 ' *this World* can boast, cannot be worth one
 ' Thought from him, who has all *Heaven* in the
 ' Divine *Bellraizia*!' ' But till that Day, at
 ' least (*answer'd I, smiling*) you ought not to
 ' forsake him, and who can tell how long
 ' a Space of Time may be between this Instant
 ' *now*, and *that*? You look with Wonder in
 ' your Countenance (*continu'd I, perceiving him*
 ' *surpriz'd*;) but knowing you so strictly de-
 ' voted to your Prince, I long have wish'd to
 ' discourse you on this Theme, and should be
 ' more oblig'd than Words can thank you for,
 ' would you endeavour to divert his Thoughts
 ' from one who cannot love him, nor but with
 ' Horror unconceivable can ever yield to be
 ' his Wife.' ——— ' Not *love* him, Madam!
 ' (*in-*

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‘ (interrupted he) Grant Heaven my Ears deceive me!—not love a Prince who has all the Perfections that Man can boast—a Prince who dies for you, and to whom you have given so many Assurances you would reward his Passion?’— ‘ ’Twas by my Father’s and the King’s Commands (*resum’d I*) for know, my Heart had never part in what I said, nor shall their Power oblige me longer to disguise the Truth; I cannot love, and therefore will not consent to— ‘ Hold, Princess! (*cry’d the generous Abdomar, transported with Grief and Amazement*) I conjure you by the Gods recall that rash Resolve, which else too late Consideration will enforce you to repent:— Where in the Race of Man can there be found a Worth like *Mulyzeden’s*? The strictest Honour, Justice, Truth, and Goodness are the Ingredients of his Godlike Soul! Then for his Form, O Princess! is it not noble?—What a manly Majesty dwells in his Air? What Sweetness in his Smiles?— And with all this, a Love so true, so perfect, and so pure, that which the Blest above regard each other with, is scarce so free from Taint.’ Had I not been Witness of the Conversation which had lately past between him and *Mulyzeden*, I should not have been surprized to hear him plead in this manner; but knowing him his Rival, the Generosity of his Soul fill’d me with a Wonder equal to my Love; and I must confess, tho’ it was before at the greatest Height I then believed it could arrive, I felt from this Moment an Addition: But resolved to try him farther yet, ‘ I own the Merits of Prince *Mulyzeden* (*said I coldly*;) but
‘ if

' if you have ever been acquainted with that
 ' Passion, you well know that it is not without
 ' reason that the God of it is painted blind.'
 ' Ah! Madam (*interrupted he*) can you confess
 ' the least Knowledge what it is to love, yet
 ' seem insensible of it for *Mulyzeden's* Charms?
 ' But thus (*continu'd he with an Accent which ex-*
 ' *press'd the utmost Earnestness, and falling on his*
 ' *Knees*) thus, most adorable *Bellraizia*! let me
 ' entreat you to consider well, e'er you resolve
 ' to make my Prince unhappy——think what
 ' a Breach of Honour and of Justice it would
 ' be to throw him from those high-rais'd Hopes
 ' to which your Promises have exalted him——
 ' think he cannot out-live the cruel Certainty
 ' of your Unkindness, and if not *Love*, let *Pity*
 ' move you never to let this fatal Knowledge
 ' reach his Ear——for me, not all the Tor-
 ' tures which the Damned endure should force
 ' me to reveal it.'——' Nor——nor needst
 ' thou, Traitor! (*cry'd a Voice behind me*) my
 ' Eyes and Ears have but too well inform'd
 ' themselves, and urge me thus to Vengeance.'
 With the hearing these Words, I saw the Per-
 son who spoke them was no other than Prince
Mulyzeden, who, returning to the Palace, had
 been Witness of the Posture *Abdomar* was in;
 and drawing nearer as fast as he could, heard his
 last Words, which unhappily misconstruing,
 transported him so far as to make him draw his
 Sword, before the other had time to put
 himself in any Posture of Defence, had he de-
 sign'd it: but he attempted it not, and making
 bare his Breast when the Prince run fiercely at
 him, had certainly bury'd the Weapon in his
 Heart, had I not interpos'd. Frighted and
 con-

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confus'd as I was, I sent forth a Shriek which might have reached a much greater Distance, than it was to the Centinels which were placed at the Garden Gates; and stepping between them—— ‘Check this rash Sally of an ungo-vern'd and a causeless Fury (*cry'd I to the Prince*) or thro *Bellraizia* give the Wound.’ You do well, Madam, *answer'd he*, to defend the Man who has declar'd a Passion for you, I wish you had that Charity for all who love you.’ Your Words (*resum'd I*) are too mysterious for me to comprehend the meaning of, and all I can gather either from them, or your Behaviour, is to *me* affrontive, and to your *Friend* injurious.’ By this time, there was a Crowd of Courtiers and Soldiers about us, and my *Father*, who happen'd to be just entring the Garden when I call'd out, came up among the rest: He had heard what I said to the Prince, and casting a furious Look at me, was about to speak, when *Mulyzedon* prevented him, by saying, ‘Sir, I desire you, whose Authority can justify the Act, as the Story I have to tell you will my Accusation, to order that Traytor (pointing to *Abdomar*) into close Confinement, till a worse Punishment is inflicted on him.’ My *Father* immediately making a Sign to some of the Guard, they took him away, which he submitted to with all the Resignation imaginable. I durst not utter the least word of that Indignation my Soul was full of to *Mulyzedon*, because of my *Father's* Presence; but he walking away with the *Prince*, who was impatient to disburthen his Bosom of the Anguish he was possess'd of, I went to *Zatilda's* Apartment to communicate
to

to her this Adventure, and ask her Advice which way I should proceed: but I had scarce time to recount it to her, before I receiv'd a Message from the *King* to retire to my own side, and not to stir from thence without Permission.—Both the *Princess* and myself were extremely startled at this unexpected Mission; but the Person who brought it not leaving the Chamber till I went with him, neither of us had opportunity to express what we thought.

AFTER I was conducted to my Apartment, I found it was my Prison; the Persons who waited on me were order'd to admit no Persons without a particular Licence, nor deliver any Letter or Message for me without other Orders than my own. Incens'd to the greatest Vehemence my Temper could be rais'd to, at hearing this Command, I entreated to see my *Father*; but was told his Rage against me was too violent to permit me to come into his Presence, till he could bear it with more Calmness.—

AS the charming *Belraizia* was in this part of her Story, she was interrupted by the sudden rising of a Storm, which express'd the utmost Fury of the warring Elements; at first with distant Roar the whistling Winds but threatned Danger, but soon the dreadful Noise came nearer, from every quarter of the angry Heavens the Tempest seem'd to blow, and demanded the Pilot's utmost Skill and Care. But soon there was no use of either; the horrible Hurricane baffled the Sailors Art, and those who were adventurous enough to aim at stemming it, paid dear—

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dearly for their vain Attempt. — At length, Masts, Cables, Rudder, all that could be defensive, being lost, the Ship was tost about at pleasure of the mounting Waves, which sometimes bore it almost to the Skies, and sometimes dash'd it down so low, that those that were aboard had little Hope of Rising. — A vast Variety of Horror might here be seen and heard, numbers of distracted Wretches unfit either to live or die; but, frightened at the Apprehensions of Death's near Approach, ran up and down confus'd, some cursing, some crying — No Calm appear'd but in the Faces of *Abdomar*, and his *Bellraizia*, and they appeared undaunted but for each other's Fate, and seem'd to comfort themselves, that since they must die, they should die together. As for *Idalia*, not all the Misfortunes she had endur'd, or the little probability there was that Life should afford her any great portion of Felicity, could enable her to support the Terror of this dreadful Hour; for it was not much more from the beginning of the Storm to the Time in which the Ship, bulging against a Rock, was dash'd to pieces. Most of the Mariners, as expert as they were in swimming, perish'd in this watry Desolation; but *Idalia*, reserv'd to know more, and greater Ills than yet she had endur'd, was miraculously preserv'd: In her Fright she had catch'd fast hold of one of the Beams which ribb'd the side of the Ship, which being in the dreadful Crack torn off, she clinging round it, was plung'd at once among the Waves. Who that had been Witness of this Scene would ever have believed they should have seen her alive on shore? Yet it so pleas'd
Pro-

Providence, that the Storm, as tho' it had done the Work it was rais'd for, ceas'd immediately after, and the Piece of Timber lightly floating bore her to the Wreck of another Ship, which, like that she had been in, had suffer'd. — The broken Carcass lay tossing up and down, and stopp'd her further Progress. They were so near the Shore, that some People (as 'tis common for those who live by the Sea-side) coming out in Boats either to enrich themselves by the Ruins of those who have perished, or to afford their Help to those who are in a condition of receiving it, spy'd afar off with wonder this little Log, which they discern'd bore something living on it, and made up to it with all the speed their Oars enabled them: They arriv'd just Time enough to prevent *Idalia* and her Supporter from sinking, as else they must inevitably have done, suck'd into the Whirlpool which that unwieldy Wreck had made, and it was with all the difficulty in the world, and danger to themselves, that they sav'd her. She was more dead than alive when they got her into the Boat; but rowing back again as soon as they could, one of the Men, who happened to be of a charitable and compassionate Disposition, carry'd her in his Arms to a little Cottage he had just by the Sea-side. — He had a Wife, whose Humanity and Goodness was much beyond what could be expected from People of their Station: She undress'd her, laid her on a Bed, and us'd the utmost of her Endeavours to bring her to herself, which at length she was successful in; and *Idalia* lifting up her Eyes, began to enquire where she was, and what had hap-

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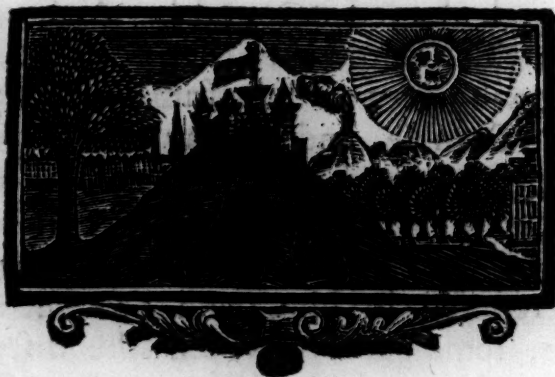
happened ; for she was capable of remembring nothing, since that dreadful Burst which tore her from her Company : which when she had been informed of, and that in all probability there was not a Person sav'd but herself, she was in the greatest Concern imaginable for the unhappy Fate of *Abdomar* and *Bellraizia*.

SHE continued some Days too weak to travel, and after she was in a Condition, cou'd not resolve in what manner. Her Beauty had led her into so many Dangers, that she resolved for the future to disguise her Sex till she should arrive at a Place of Safety ; and persisting in her Design of going to *Naples*, thought her best way would be through *Rome*, being now not above 30 Miles from thence. She had a String of Diamonds in her Hair the Day she left her Father's House, and on her putting on the Habit of a Country Girl to escape from the House where the unknown Person had placed her, she had tyed it round her Arm under her Sleeve ; this she gave to her good old Host to sell, knowing it would be sufficient to pay him for his Trouble, and defray the Expences of her Journey.

THE poor Fellow honestly discharg'd the Trust repos'd in him, and brought her 700 Crowns, some part of which she dispos'd of, in making him and his Wife a grateful Retribution for their Kindness, and some of it she laid out in furnishing herself with Men's Clothes ; the rest she kept to supply her in her Travels. But what befel her in them, and the Continuance of the Adventures of *Abdomar* and *Bellraizia* (who

had not perished as she imagined) must be left for the *next* Part ; which shall be the *last*, and fully conclude the History of this unhappy Wanderer.

The End of the Second Part.





IDA LIA:

OR,

The Unfortunate Mistress.

PART III.



OW little are those blest with a paternal Protection, able to comprehend the thousand Dangers which attend a wandering and unguarded State of Life ! 'The unhappy *Idalia*, accompany'd by that honest, good-natur'd poor Fellow, who had preserv'd her from the Sea, had gone above half her Journey to *Rome* without meeting any Opposition ; but happening to overtake three Gentlemen, who falling into Discourse with her on the Road, had told her, they

E 2

were

were travelling that way, she discharg'd her Guide, as believing she shou'd have no further need of him. Her Men's Clothes, which she became exceeding well, she thought was Security enough from any of those Insults she had of late been so terrify'd with, and the Company of these Gentlemen from the Danger of losing her way, or any other Inconvenience. But, alas ! as much as she imagin'd she knew of the World, and as great a Variety of Adventures as she had gone through, she was now entring into a Misfortune she had not the least Notion of : She had not parted from her Conductor above a quarter of an Hour, before her new Companions began to ask her, what her Business was at *Rome*, how far she had travell'd, the Names of her Parents, and a thousand other impertinent Questions, which she was not a little puzzled in what manner to answer : but she thought there was no great occasion for disguising the Story of her Shipwreck ; therefore gave them a brief account of that, and as to the rest of their Enquiries, only told them, that her Design was for *Naples*, but having suffered so much by the Uncertainty of the Weather, she chose rather to take so long a Journey by Land, than trust any more to the Mercy of the Sea. They did not seem satisfy'd with this Reply, but press'd her very much to let them know to what Study she had been bred. ' You appear, *said one of them*, ' to be a very pretty Youth ; I cannot think you ' are of Quality, because you are without an Equipage, therefore must imagine your Education ' has been either for the Gown, or the Army.' ' Doubtless it is so, *added the other*, and you ' have no Reason to conceal the Truth of your ' Affairs

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‘ Affairs from us, who probably may be of Service to you.’ ‘ Aye, resumed he that spoke first, that we may, provided he has but Resolution. Hark-ye, continued he, looking on Idalia, can you handle Arms? — Have you ever learnt to fence?’ — Interrogatories like these took from her all Capacity of answering! she grew both terrified and amazed, tho’ she knew not the Cause, till one of them, who seem’d to be the fiercest, gave her to understand they were of those who were call’d the *Banditti*, and that if she would consent to list herself among them, she would never want for any thing. At this Information it was as much as she could do to keep herself from fainting away; but summoning all the little Spirit she had left, at last she had Courage to tell them, she had neither need, nor was fit for any such Employ: but that she thank’d them for their kind Intentions, and endeavour’d to make her Refusal as civil as she could, fearing, and not without Reason, that Men, who liv’d as they did, were not of a Humour to endure Plain-dealing. But all she could say, palliated not the Bitterness of her first Words, so much as to engage them to forgive the Contempt with which they found themselves treated, and one of them looking on his Fellow, presently cry’d, ‘ Damn the little saucy Rascal, let us stick him against a Tree. — No, reply’d the other, who seem’d something more pitiful, let the foolish Boy live to repent his refusing so good an Offer, ’tis not worth our Trouble to kill him’. ‘ Well then, said the first, we’ll see what a Stock of Money he has that makes him so proud, and since he thinks himself above societing with us, he shall help

‘ to support us without his Company.’ ‘ Aye,
‘ aye, *rejoin’d the other*, with all my heart’.

POOR *Idalia* was too much frighted all this while to be able to utter one Word more, tho’ by it she had been sure to save both her Life, and that which was now almost as precious to her, that little Money which had been rais’d on the last thing she had of Value in the World ; but suffered herself to be stript of it without either entreating, or complaining. After they had ransack’d her Pockets, they contented themselves with what they found there, and killing the Beast she rode on (to prevent her making any pursuit after them, in case any Persons should chance to come that way, and join with her in it) left her to get to *Rome* as she cou’d.

IT was some time before the Terror this Accident had put her in, gave her leave even to reflect on the Misfortune that was befallen her ; but when she did, scarce any thing could seem more dreadful to her. Had they not destroy’d her Horse, she might have hoped either to have found her way to *Rome*, or some other Town, from which she might have writ to *Venice* for a Supply ; but to travel on foot, was little agreeable to the Weakness and Delicacy of her Sex and Constitution : besides, to be entirely destitute of Money in a Place so altogether unknown, was what might have shock’d a Courage infinitely exceeding her’s. She vented some part of the Anguish of her Soul in Tears, but they unavailing to help her forward in her Journey, and the Necessity there was of prosecuting it, she at length rose from the Ground she had been sitting

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ting on, and began her weary Pilgrimage ; the Thoughts of which, and the little Probability there was she should ever be able to go through it, rendred her yet more uncapable. She went on in a slow pace, yet too fast for her to continue long, and her Strength and Spirits failing, a thousand tormenting Considerations all at once assailing her, Delpair, which the natural Chearfulness of her Disposition had so often repell'd, now seiz'd on her whole Soul ; she yielded to the black *Idea* of her Woe, and thinking it vain to struggle any more against the o'erpowersing Tide of strong Affliction, suffered herself to be borne away with it, and for some moments lost the Pain of *Thought*. — She was stretch'd at her Length in a kind of Slumber, or rather Fit, by the side of a little Stream which ran through a Meadow in sight of the great Road : Her Hat, when she lay down, had fallen off her Head, and her delicate Hair was blown by the Wind to and fro, now shading, now disclosing all her lovely Face to the Sun's burning View ; who, if capable of those Desires which Poets have described him with, must have forsaken his *Car*, and stoop'd to be more blest than *Daphne*, had she been kind, cou'd e'er have made him.

I T was in this Love and Pity-moving Posture she was discovered by a Lady, who passing by in her Chariot had seen something lie at that distance, and had Curiosity enough to alight and walk to the Place where she was — But when she beheld the Features of the beautiful *Idalia*, which neither the Fatigue, nor Fright, nor Grief she had endur'd could render

unlovely, she began to feel a trembling at her Heart, which she was too well acquainted with, not to comprehend: but not being of a Humour to constrain her Inclinations, indulg'd the growing Flame by gazing on, till the seeming *Chevalier* beginning a little to recover, looking up with Astonishment to see a Lady of a most dazzling Appearance, and attended by a number of Servants in a Place where but a Moment before (as she imagin'd) she had been alone, and without Hope of meeting any body, had such an additional Charm to what her sleeping Graces wore, that the already enflamed Lady, taking her for what her Dress bespoke her, was now half mad with wild Desires; but endeavouring to conceal her Sentiments from the Observation of her Servants, she turned to them, and being of a ready Invention, presently told them, that lovely Youth was one of her near Relations, and she supposed by some Villany had been betray'd, and left there in that manner. *Idalia* was enough come to herself to hear what she said, but had not Presence of Mind at that Juncture to determine how she should behave: at first she thought of discovering her Sex, believing it might be an Inducement to one of the same to afford her some Relief; but her speaking in that manner to her Attendants, prevented her, and she remained silent, as not being able to guess what 'twas she meant, till the Lady asking her how she came to be alone, and in a Disorder which was visible in her Face, she told her she had been in the hands of Robbers, who had left her nothing but her Life. 'Thank Heaven' for that, said the enamoured Lady, all other Misfortunes may be redeem'd, and since I know
 ' you

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‘ you are a great way from your own home, be
‘ pleas’d to accept of mine for some time ; my
‘ House is not above three Miles distant from
‘ hence : I have a Chariot waits, and you shall
‘ go with me to take that Repose which the
‘ Condition I find you in seems to require.’ *Ida-*
lia had not the power of answering her any o-
therwise than with a low Bow, so much had
one Surprise on the back of another depriv’d
her of her wonted Readiness of Apprehension :
but thinking whatever Design this unknown La-
dy had, either in the Civilities she shew’d her,
or the Tale she had invented of her being a Re-
lation, it cou’d not be any thing to her Preju-
dice, or if it were, it was still shifting the Scene
of Vexation, which to the Wretched is some
Ease ; she gave her Hand, and suffer’d her to
lead her to the Chariot, where as soon as they
were seated, ‘ I perceive, *said the Lady*, that
‘ you are surpriz’d at what I told my Servants ;
‘ but it was a Stratagem which my Prudence
‘ inspir’d me with : My Pity to see a Person of
‘ your Appearance in so dejected a Posture, first
‘ led me to a Resolution to remedy your Mis-
‘ fortunes, if it be in my power ; and the Re-
‘ gard every Woman ought to have for her Re-
‘ putation, join’d to the common Safety of us
‘ both, to make you pass as a Relation, lest at
‘ the Return of my Husband, who is now ab-
‘ sent, and will be for some Days, my Behaviour
‘ should be reported to him in a different man-
‘ ner from what I would have it. — There is,
‘ *continued she*, a curst Necessity in Wedlock,
‘ which obliges one sometimes to disguise the
‘ Truth, and for that reason Fools should never
‘ marry.’ These Words, and the Air which ac-
company’d.

company'd them, made the pretended *Chevalier* guess to what Motive she was indebted for this unexpected Relief, and in spite of the various Disquiets which possess her, cou'd scarce forbear smiling to herself at the Oddness of such an Adventure; but thinking it cou'd not be to her detriment to humour the Caprice, and having too well been acquainted with what Men say on those Occasions, answered her in Terms which were infinitely obliging to her. *Donna Antonia* (for that was the Name of this Lady) already began to flatter herself with a Belief she was secure of the Heart of this young Charmer, and free from all those Fears which generally are the Companions of Love, talk'd all the way with as much Familiarity as tho' their Acquaintance had bore the Date of as many Years, as it did of Minutes: but desiring to be inform'd of the Name and Quality of her Lover, our little *Hero* presently told her, that tho' there were some Reasons which oblig'd him to conceal himself; yet that he should make no Scruple of letting her know both who he was, and why he had left the Place of his Birth: And then related a long Account, which she form'd in the speaking, that she was born at *Verona* of one of the most noble Families in the Place; but, having the Misfortune to kill in a Duel a Son of one of the Magistrates, was oblig'd to fly till the Affair cou'd be made up. 'This, Madam, said the counterfeit Don, is my History, nor have I any thing farther to inform you of, than that in my Way to *Rome* I met some of the *Banditti*, who have plundered me of all the ready Money, Jewels, and Bills I had about me, leaving me in the Condition in which your Compassion found

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‘ found me, without any thing to recommend me
‘ to your Care, but a Heart entirely free from all
‘ Engagements except those which the Influence
‘ of your Charms has made.’ In fine, the little
Gallant address’d in a Fashion so agreeable to
the Sex she imitated, that it was no wonder
Donna Antonia was both deceived and charmed
with it. When they came to the end of their
Journey, they alighted at the Gate of a magni-
ficent Dwelling, which being open’d, our young
Adventurer was conducted in with all imagina-
ble Ceremony ; a fine Collation was immediately
set forth, where the richest Wines, choicest
Fruits, and extravagant Kindness of the fair In-
viter, strove which most should please the belo-
ved Guest : But, alas ! whatever Smiles her
Face might be constrain’d to wear, her Heart
felt little Satisfaction in all the Splendor she saw
about her, and the Welcome she found. She
long’d with the utmost Impatience to be alone,
and at liberty to indulge a Melancholy she had
but too just a Cause for ; and pretending to be
still out of order with the late Fatigue, entreat-
ed she might retire. *Antonia* willing to oblige
her Favourite in all things, deny’d herself the
Pleasure of his Conversation to allow him
that of his Repose, and ordered him to be
shewed to a Chamber, one of the noblest in the
House.

IDALIA had been so much accustomed to
the Vicissitudes of Fortune, that she was less as-
tonish’d at this, than probably another would
have been : but it serv’d very much to encrease
the Perplexities she was in. She knew not whe-
ther to consider it as a good or ill Chance : To
be

be relieved from the fear of perishing in so miserable a manner as that of Want, she cou'd not but acknowledge as a peculiar Mark of the Care of an all-seeing Providence ; but then the Passion, which the Mistake of her Sex had inspired in the Person ordain'd to be her Deliverer, she thought an *Omen* of something fatal to her, tho' she cou'd by no means form any Conjecture by what means. Full of melancholy Reflections of the Dangers, the Terrors, the Disappointments she had met, and those which in all likelihood she was yet to encounter, she fancied she regretted the unaccountable Obstacles which had hitherto hindred her from a monastick Life, the most of any Misfortune she had gone thro' ; but, alas ! how little was she capable of judging of her own Soul !—The Remembrance of *Myrtano's* Charms, — the swelling Transports whenever Imagination presented him to her, with those tender Wishes in his Eyes which often she had read there — the Horror which invaded her, when she reflected on his Infidelity — would soon have made her sensible in any other's Case, that it was to the Temple of *Love* the chiefest of her Orisons were directed, and *Religion* had but the second Place. But however it were, never Woman endured more thro' the working of so many different Passions ; and it was the Confusion of her Thoughts alone that rendred her incapable of forming, much less of keeping any Resolution Reason should suggest. It certainly had been the most prudent, as well as most honourable part, to have confessed herself a Woman to *Donna Antonia* ; but the Uncertainty what she shou'd do, or where to retreat, if by that Discovery she should forfeit her
Pro-

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Protection, deterr'd her from it. The Perturbations of her Mind, which hindered her from closing her Eyes all Night, the vast Fatigue she had endured in walking so much beyond her Strength, together with a Cold she had got by lying on the Grass, threw her into a Fever; which as soon as *Antonia* was inform'd of by the Servant whom she sent with a Good-morrow, she ordered a Physician immediately to give his Attendance; all imaginable Care was taken, nor cou'd there have been more, had the Welfare of the whole World depended on this single Life. — What Zeal, what Caution, what Tenderneſs, does Love inspire, when alarm'd with the least Danger of losing the beloved Object! *Antonia* would needs be present at every Prescription, trusted no Hand but her own to mingle up the Medicines, watch'd herself by the Bedside, and chid the tardy Nurse's Sloth, listen'd to every Groan, and answer'd them with Sighs. Never did the fondest Wife, the tenderest Mother, or most dutiful Child, with such unfeigned Concern, such interested Hopes and Fears, alternate Joy and Terror, every Day, almost every Hour, receive the different Sentiments which the Physicians gave, according as the Distemper abated or encreas'd. For several Days no settled Judgment could be made of Life or Death; but at last, the Strength of Nature in so young a Person, join'd to the extraordinary Care and Skill which had been us'd, o'ercame the Malignity of the Disease, and she was transported with the News, that her dear Cousin (for so she call'd the feign'd *Chevalier*) was entirely out of danger.

BUT

BUT this Indisposition had made a very great Alteration in the Sentiments of *Idalia*; for as before she but fancy'd she wish'd for a *Recluse* Life, she now in reality began to do so; with her Bodily Strength, her Passions were now debilitated, the Noise and Hurry of the World were now in good earnest odious to her, and Love itself, tho' not wholly extinguish'd, burn'd with a dim and feeble Fire: The Duties of Religion, and a true Repentance for the Mismanagement and Follies of her past Life, now took up all her Thoughts; and as she was of a Disposition generous enough, when Vanity, Pride or Love did not over sway her, she resolv'd to undeceive *Antonia*, and use the utmost of her Endeavours to persuade her to turn the Current of her Affections, where both the Laws of God and Man requir'd them, and henceforward banish all Desire but for her Husband. She had just fix'd herself in this pious Resolution, when *Antonia* came into the Chamber; and before she could have an Opportunity of executing it, told her, the Reason she had absented herself so long, (for she had not been there in some Hours) was, That her Husband was returned from *Viterbo*, where he had been some time before her Arrival, and that in decency she had been oblig'd to dine with him; but that having told him, she had a near Relation in the House, he desir'd, if it was not inconsistent with his Repose, to be admitted to visit him. What *Idalia* had to say would have taken up more time than could now be spar'd, besides she was willing to see what the Person and Behaviour of this Gentleman would allow her to say in his favour, before she

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attempted to work any Change in the Sentiments of his Wife : therefore only telling her she should receive the Favour he intended her, with that Pleasure which became one so much oblig'd, *Antonia* took her leave with a Smile, which testify'd it was not to him he had been oblig'd, and immediately return'd accompanied by her Husband.

IDALIA, by reason of her Weakness, still kept her Bed, but was supported by Pillows in such a manner, that she rather *sat* than *lay* : She had compos'd her Mind as much as possible, that she might be the better able to make a Judgment of this Gentleman. But how immediately was it o'erthrown ! — How, in an Instant, was all the Sedateness she had assum'd chang'd into Confusion, Shame, Horror, Distraction, when the Moment they enter'd the Room she saw the Husband of *Antonia* was no other than *Myrtano* ! What Words can represent, what Heart conceive what hers endur'd at this so unexpected, so shocking a View ! A thousand Furies all at once possess her, chill Fear, and burning Rage, wild Jealousy, and mad Despair, and Thought-disjointing Amazement, with all the black *Ideas* they could raise, crowded into her Soul. — Of all the surprizing Accidents of her unhappy Life, nothing is more to be wondered at, than that she survived this dreadful Moment, or at least did not by some Extravagance discover both her Sex, and the Cause of her Distraction : But tho' her Eyes shot perfect Fires, and seem'd to start from forth their glowing Orbs, — her Lips trembled, her Hair stood an end as tho' some Spectre had met her

her

her Sight, and every Limb was shook with inward Agonies ; yet she neither spoke, nor acted any thing which could give the Standers-by the Liberty of guessing from what Cause the Alteration they beheld had sprung. *Antonia* appeared infinitely troubled to find so sudden a Change, which she looked on as a Relapse into that Distemper which had given her so many Fears : And *Myrtano's* Good-Nature and Complaisance obliged him to join in her Concern. They stayed not above a Moment or two, *Myrtano* easily perceiv'd the Stranger was not in a Condition to endure Company, and *Antonia* ran instantly away to send for the Physician.

H A D they stay'd longer, 'tis probable indeed she might not have had the power of preserving herself undiscovered ; for it was not to any Presence of Mind that her Reserve was owing, but to the too great Multitude of various Emotions, which, warring with each other in her Bosom, would not suffer her to utter any. — She fell into a Swoon the Moment they left the Room, and by that means was very near discovering to the old Nurse that attended her, that her Patient was not of the Sex she pretended to be ; for after rubbing her Temples, and applying Things to her Nostrils, she was about to open her Linnen Waistcoat, which she had always wore close-button'd, just as she recover'd : But her *ill Genius* had prevailed so far over her *good one*, as not to suffer the Discovery to be made in a manner so little to her Prejudice, as also to prolong her Life, to experience more Misery. In spite of her Weakness, in spite of the additional Torments the Sight of *Myrtano*, as
Husband

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Husband of *Antonia*, had inflicted on her, she grew better every day, and in a Week's time was able to walk about her Chamber : All which time she was visited several times in a day by the fair Wife of *Don Myrtano*, who in Spite of the Caution she had of giving him any Suspicion of her Inclinations, cou'd not forbear gratifying 'em so far as to come, as often as she cou'd get an Opportunity, to look upon her Soul's Ador'd. But the Sentiments of *Idalia* were now entirely chang'd again ; she no longer thought it proper to make herself be known, nor could find in her heart to use any Endeavours for the Conversion of *Antonia*, she rather wish'd her Indifference for him might encrease ; for since she knew her to be a Rival, and a Rival possess'd of all those Joys she once had vainly hoped, not all the good Offices she had done her could hinder her from regarding her with a mortal Hatred. — Him too she hated, or she imagin'd at that time she did so ; and if in the wild Tumults of her troubled Thoughts she ever was compos'd enough to pray, it was only to invoke Heaven to revenge her Wrongs, and curse them both with lasting Discord and Eternal Strife.

ALL the time of her keeping her Chamber, *Myrtano* had never offered to visit her since the first time ; at which she was not a little astonish'd, and began to fear that even in that transient View he had seen enough thro' her Disguise to know her ; and, conscious of the Injustice he had been guilty of to her, was ashamed to meet the Reproaches of her Eyes. — *Antonia* was also surpriz'd, but would not press it, nor ask the Reason of his Neglect, lest he

should imagine her, as she was, too far interested in it; and having by his Absence greater Opportunities of entertaining her Beloved, did not much perplex herself about finding out the Meaning of his allowing her to do so. She was infinitely more concern'd, that the Darling of her Wishes had made so small a Return to her Advances: The seeming Youth had behaved herself with so much Gallantry, the Day she brought him home, that she expected an immediate Declaration of Affection would have ensued. All the time of his Sickness she had no other Fear than to be deprived of her Desires by Death; but now, when she perceiv'd him perfectly past danger, she found herself farther from the Possession of them than ever she had believ'd herself; and one day being alone in the Chamber with him, cou'd no longer contain the furious Ardor with which she was possess'd, but not only by Words, but also Actions, endeavour'd to make the dear Ungrateful sensible how much she had suffered from his Coldness.

IDALIA, who hated her before for being the Wife of *Myrtano*, now despis'd and scorn'd her; the endearing Expressions with which she was treated by her, made her appear more odious, and wholly unguarded by the Multiplicity of her Reflections, before she was aware, flinging away and stamping, 'Gods! Gods! cry'd 'she, is this a Woman for *Myrtano* to love!' She had no sooner spoke these Words, than he rush'd into the Room with his Sword drawn, and had certainly prevented her from ever saying more, if his Wife, as much as surpriz'd she was, had not been quick enough to prevent him,

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him, by catching fast hold of his Arm, and continuing to hang upon it, notwithstanding all his Endeavours to throw her off : ‘ Be gone, perfidious Woman ! *said he furiously*, unless you wish to perish with your *Minion* a Victim to your shameful Passion. Is it not enough that you conspir’d the Death of her who alone was worthy of my Love, but you must add Adultery to your Design of Murder ?— You know I am not ignorant of your monstrous ——— your more than brutal Disposition. ——— How dare you then to tempt me thus, lest I should take a full Revenge for all my Wrongs at once ?’ ‘ I never, never wrong’d you, *interrupted she, still clinging fast about him*, if I contrived my Rival’s Death, ’twas Love of you that was the Cause, inhuman as you are to upbraid me with it.’ ‘ And was it Love of me (*resum’d he more violently*) that induc’d you to court this Stranger, whom falsely you would have pass’d on me for a Relation ?—— But I have been inform’d of all, and will have Reparation.’ — In speaking these Words, he us’d his utmost Force to disengage himself, and having done it, ran fiercely at *Idalia* ; which she perceiving, evaded the Blow by falling on her Knees, and imagining something by the Reproaches which in his Indignation he had made his Wife, prevented him from lifting up his Hand against her, by crying out to him, ‘ Hold, hold, Don *Myrtano*, I conjure you spare my Life till you shall know who ’tis you are about to destroy, and till you satisfy me who that Lady was your Wife so cruelly design’d to murder.’ ‘ What is that to thee ? (*resum’d he, vex’d that he had men-*

‘*tion’d that before him.*’ ‘Oh, ’tis of more Moment (*answer’d she*) perhaps to you and me, than yet you comprehend. — For Heaven’s sake then, and for your own, indulge my Curiosity in this Request, and tell me, if the Lady destin’d to fall a Sacrifice to you and Love, was not call’d *Idalia*.’ — Both the Husband and the Wife started from the Places they stood in at the mention of that Name, as tho’ a Clap of Thunder had pronounced it; but the former looking earnestly in the Face of the Person that spoke it for the space of two or three Minutes, found something there which dissipated great part of the Fury he had been in; the Air, the Features, and the Voice of *Idalia*, were too deeply imprinted in his Memory not to be distinguish’d thro’ all Disguises: Immediately he knew her, and, regardless of his Wife’s Presence, flew to her, and caught her in his Arms, and cry’d in an Extasy which no false Love could feign, ‘It is, it is *Idalia*; my only ever-
‘lasting Charmer.’

IT was impossible for a Woman, who lov’d with that Transcendency of Passion, to be thus clasp’d, yet feel no Satisfaction in the tender Pressure: Not all the Resentment she had against him for his marrying another, had power to make her resist his Embraces; but as soon as he had given them Truce, which he did only to gratify his Sight with another View of her dear well-known Face, as he had done his Touch in holding her to his Bosom, she recollected herself enough to remove some few Steps from him; and looking on him with a Countenance as severe as she had power to put on — ‘I was satisfied
‘you

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‘ you should know who I am (*said she*) because
‘ you should be sensible how little your Wife
‘ has been capable of wronging you in the man-
‘ ner your jealous Fury had suggested ; but de-
‘ fire not, as you are now another’s, any Testi-
‘ monies of that former Affection which was
‘ between us, which you have forfeited, and I
‘ am willing to forget ; since the Remembrance
‘ would be as great a Crime in me, as that you
‘ lately suspected her guilty of.’ He was just go-
ing to reply, when *Donna Antonia*, who had all
this while been unable by reason of her Surprise
to discharge any part of the Rage she was full
of, stepping hastily between them, cry’d, ‘ And
‘ are you *Idalia* ?’ ‘ Yes, (*answer’d she, not at all*
‘ *daunted at the Fury she saw in her Countenance*)
‘ and I imagine you are the Neice of Count
‘ *Miramont.*’ ’Tis probable here might have
follow’d a long Combat of Words, the War
of Women, if *Don Myrtano* had not put an end
to it. ‘ Madam, (*said he to his Wife, in a Voice*
‘ *nothing softned from that in which he had spoke*
‘ *to her before*) tho’ I am assur’d no Injury could
‘ here be done me, yet your Intentions were
‘ the same : My own Ears heard you declare a
‘ Passion shameful to your Sex and Character ;
‘ but it is hereafter that I shall tell you my
‘ Sentiments on this Affair ; in the mean time, I
‘ command you, by that Power the Name of
‘ Husband gives me (and which your forfeiting
‘ all Title either to my Love or Respect, obliges
‘ me to make use of) to retire to your own A-
‘ partment, and wait my coming. This, (*con-*
‘ *tinued he more sternly, perceiving her not about to*
‘ *go*) if you refuse to obey, I will this moment
‘ make Complaints of your Behaviour to the

'Pope, and lay before him the whole Scene of your Proceedings.' Of as haughty and impatient a Disposition as *Antonia* was, this Menace exacted her Compliance, and she left the Room, only casting a Look back on *Idalia*, which spoke, more plainly than a thousand Words could do, the Violence of her Rage.

THE Reader will easily imagine, that after she was gone, Don *Myrtano* address'd his long lost Charmer with all the soft Endearments suitable to so surprizing an Occasion; but she, who was not willing to yield to the Pleasure she took in hearing them, and withal desirous to be inform'd by what means *Donna Antonia* had known her to have been her Rival, it being a Secret she believ'd to all in *Venice*, and also if it were really she who had brib'd the unknown Person to murder her in the Forest, let him know it would be infinitely more satisfactory to her to be let into what he knew of these Affairs, than all he could say on any other. He was too glad of an Opportunity, which while he obliged her in the Grant of her Request, would also clear him of his suspected Infidelity to let it slip; and engaging her to sit down by him, while he fulfill'd her Commands, began to unravel a Mystery, which had appeared so confounding to her Understanding, in these Words.

The

*The History of Don Myrtano, and Don
Honorius dell Miramont.*

YOU may remember, Madam ! (said he, sighing) doubtless with an Infinity of Indignation remember, that the last time I ever had the Blessing of seeing you at *Vicenza*, I received not the Honour you then vouchsafed me, of assuring me you would not refuse to be mine, when ever I should claim you by ways you should approve, and as became a Man worthy of the adorable *Idalia*'s Affection. But, oh ! had you been sensible what I endured in the severe Necessity of appearing so ungrateful, so stupid, so blind to the inestimable Happiness that Condescension offer'd me, you would rather pity than condemn me. ——— I had, when I was very young, been contracted, by my Parents, to *Donna Antonia dell Miramont*, she who is now my Wife ; and who being bred here at *Rome*, I had never seen : but a former Intimacy between our Families was the Occasion of this, which I must now call unhappy *Union*. For my part, as I had a Heart entirely unprepossess'd, I agreed to it without any manner of Reluctance ; but had not Complaisance enough to take a Journey to visit her. The *Count* her Uncle, perhaps, imagining the Sight of her might engage me to hasten the Consummation of the Contract, sent her to *Venice* with an Equipage and Train proportion'd to the Fondness he had for her. At her Arrival I thought her very agreeable to what I

then wish'd for in a Wife, and indeed lik'd her better than any Lady I had seen: Nay, I really loved her enough to be impatient for the Celebration of the Nuptials, and accordingly order'd every thing to be prepared for it. The Day was appointed, and it was that in which my unhappy Brother, and Don *Ferdinand* fell Rival Victims to Love, and your Almighty Charms. Decency forbad the *Hymeneal* Torch should mingle with the *Funeral* Taper, and the Wedding by Consent of both Parties was defer'd: A fatal Curiosity inclining me to see those Eyes, those lovely Orbs of shining Ruin, I no longer thought *Antonia* worth my Care; but I need not tell you how much I lov'd, how much I ador'd an Excellence so far beyond all that ever was call'd mortal, a thousand, thousand times you have read it in my Eyes. — These glowing burning Balls, which never gaz'd upon you without starting, and almost breaking the Strings which held them, with Extasy unspeakable! — with Pleasure wound up to such a Height of racking Rapture, that it even became a Pain, and stagger'd Sense. — O what would I not then have given to have had it in my power to offer you a Passion worthy of your Acceptance! — How did I curse my Engagement with *Antonia*? — How many Stratagems did I invent to break with her? But she, better acquainted with the Secret of my Soul than at that time I imagin'd, artfully evaded my Excuses, and circumvented me in all, either because she then had really an Affection for me, or, as 'tis most probable by her Conduct since, thought it would be a Reflection on the Power of her Beauty to have it said, she had come so far to marry a Man
who

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who on any Terms could be brought to forsake her.—In fine, let me do what I would, say what I would, she seem'd not to resent it; and rendred it an Impossibility for me to quit her without making myself appear the most ungrateful and perfidious of Mankind.—I was in this perplexing *Dilemma*, when you made Tryal of my Faith, by proposing what I would have given, my Soul, to have had it in my power to accept.—I am sure you cannot forget the Confusion which was too visible in my Countenance not to be observed, which perhaps you might impute to another Score, but was really occasioned only by the inward working of my tumultuous Desires, which long'd with an Ardency inexpressible to satisfy you in a Demand which would have been so glorious for me, yet I knew not how I should effect it, tho' a Multitude of Inventions crowded that Moment at once into my Head, and flatter'd me with some little Hopes. — I went, you know, immediately away, which haste proceeded from my Impatience to return with Tydings more suitable to my Passion to bring, than any I had yet been able to tell you. — Alas! I little thought 'twould be so long before we met again, nor of the Treachery which was then in Agitation to separate us for ever.—But of that hereafter.——

WHEN I had put in execution all the Stratagems my Passion for you inspir'd me with, and found them fruitless to work the Effect I wish'd—I had no longer Patience; but resolv'd at my next Visit to disclose to you the whole History of my Misfortune on the Road to *Vicenza*. About four Miles distant from my
own

own *Villa*, I saw a Horse standing still, and looking down on a Person who lay on the Ground by him; I presently imagin'd it was somebody who had either suffer'd by a Fall from that Horse, or the Villany of some Robbers: but drawing nearer to offer what Assistance was in the power of myself or Servants to afford, I heard him utter most piteous Lamentations, mix'd with Groans.—Both Christianity, and common Compassion, obliges those of the highest Rank of Life to do what good Offices they can, even to the meanest; and tho' this Man appear'd to be one of those, I should have thought it a Pride no way commendable to have trusted the Relief of his Misery to any Care but my own: I immediately alighted, and raising him a little, presently discover'd, (to my great Surprise, to find him in such a Posture and Habit) the Face of *Don Honorius dell Miramont*, the Brother of *Antonia*, and without exception, a Chevalier of the most Perfections I ever found in Man.

IDALIA could not here forbear interrupting him, to let him know he might spare himself the trouble of giving any Character of that accomplish'd young Nobleman; for she was perfectly acquainted with his Worth, having the Honour of being frequently in his Company at *Venice*.

' YES, Madam! resum'd *Don Myrtano*, I am
' sensible you have seen him, and that the
' Consequence of such Interviews have been
' such as you never fail of causing—to inspire
' a Passion too just to be oppos'd by Reason,
' and

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“ and too violent to suffer any Considerations
“ to be of force to overcome it. But (*continu’d*
“ *he*) to pursue the little History I am about to
“ give you, this unhappy Gentleman, who
“ seem’d in Agonies such as seizes on the Body
“ when the Soul is departing from it, no sooner
“ cast his Eyes upon me, than he cry’d out,
“ O! *Don Myrtano*, you come in happy time to
“ revenge my Death—— I am poison’d——
“ the fatal Dose was given me by *Ardella*.’——

A sudden Pang seizing him that Moment, prevented his saying any more for some time; and I, who perceiv’d his Condition was indeed deplorable, thought it not a season to talk, but act, if there were any Means which Art or Nature could furnish to repel the Malignity of the Poison; and immediately dispatch’d one of my Servants to *Villa Rica* for a Litter, and another to *Padua*, to order a Physician, who I knew was a most skillful one, to meet us at *Vicenza* with all possible Expedition; the third, for by good Fortune I had so many with me, took care of my Horse, while I kneel’d down by the agoniz’d *Honorius*, and by holding his Sides, and sometimes his Head, according to the various Shootings of his Pain, afforded him some little Ease. I was impatient to the last degree, to know what he meant by saying my Servant *Ardella* had given him Poison, and fancy’d him to be a little delirious with the excessive Torture he endured, till having a little respite from it, he again said, That it was she who had administred it to him, but that he very well knew it was to oblige another she had done so. These Words gave me an Apprehension that he might imagine it occasion’d by my Order,
and

and I was beginning to protest my Innocence, but he perceiving my Intent, cry'd out to me to speak no more ; for he was well assured I was both innocent and ignorant of any such thing :
 ' But, *continued he*, I know not if you will afford me any Pity for my Sufferings, when you shall be told the Injury I have done you. But we are neither of us exempt from Faults, and you must pardon me, as you would wish to be forgiven by those to whom you are guilty of Injustice.' — There was something so mysterious in these last Words, that I could not possibly dive into their Meaning ; and the Violence of his Pain returning, prevented me from desiring him to make an Explanation of them, till another small Cessation happening, he did it of his own accord in this manner.

YOU must know, *said he*, that in all her Pride of Innocence I happened at a Ball to dance, with the admir'd *Idalia*, and from that Moment was inspir'd with a Passion for her, which not all her late Misfortunes, which have made so great a noise at *Venice*, could erase. I was just determin'd to urge my Suit to Don *Bernardo's* Ears, when her sudden Absence from his House prevented me ; since which, tho' I have search'd for her with a Diligence proportion'd to the Love I had for her, I never could hear the least Tittle to what Place, or with what happy Man she was retir'd, till my Sister's Jealousy of you furnish'd her with means to inform me, without knowing, at the same time, how much she oblig'd me in it : But coming one day to visit her, I found her drown'd in Tears, which enquiring the Reason

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son of, she told me, you had of late very much degenerated from the Affection you once professed, and which the Engagements between you demanded the Continuance of. She presently took it in her Head, that there must be some Rival in the way ; and imagining she was either at *Vicenza*, or near that Place, because she had observ'd you pass most of your time there, contrary to your Custom ; and resolving to satisfy her jealous Curiosity, found out a Method which nothing but the subtil-working Wit of an impatient disappointed Woman cou'd suggest, she got acquainted with a Sister of *Ardella's* (who by some Accident she had heard was a sort of Housekeeper to you at *Vicenza*) and by her means with herself : By Promises and Bribes she engaged that mercenary Wench to her Interest, and won the whole Secret from her of *Idalia's* having been from the time she left *Venice* a Guest there, first to *Don Henriquez*, and afterwards to you.

SUCH a Discovery was, I confess, sufficient to alarm a Heart much less imperious than *Antonia's* ; but having as great a Share of *Cunning* as *Pride*, would take not the least notice to you that she had any jealous Sentiments, much less that she was appris'd of any thing which could raise them. When she gave me this Account, she little imagin'd I had any further Interest in it, than the part which Nature oblig'd me to take for a Sister affronted in this manner ; but tho' I was not without that Consideration also, yet the Affection I had for *Idalia*, and the Misfortune I thought it to have her in

in your Possession, had infinitely the Pre-eminence, and I presently form'd a Contrivance of dressing me in the Fashion you see, and went to *Vicenza* ; where lurking about the House, I was in hopes of seeing her, or at least hearing something more than yet I had been informed of. But Fortune favoured me not so far ; I had been there several Days before any thing accrued to my Observation : but what added to my Disquiet the Sight of you twice entring, and the Imagination what a Prodigality of Felicity you were going to enjoy in the Society of *Idalia*, made me almost wild. But at last I found an Opportunity of getting into the Company of *Ardella*, and by the Character my Sister had given of her sordid Disposition, knowing which way to ingratiate my self, made her Presents of some little Trifles, which I bought of a Fellow who I saw offering them to Sale ; they were such as were suitable to the Appearance of the Person who gave them, and tho' of very small Value, were acceptable to this greedy Creature ; and I soon became so great with her, that I flattered my self I should in a little time be Master of the whole Secret of *Idalia*. Complaining that I was in Distress for a Lodging while I stay'd at *Vicenza*, she made me an Invitation of lying in your House, till I had finish'd the Business which I pretended had brought me to that part of the Country. You need not doubt but I accepted of an Offer so obliging to my Wishes, assuring my self I should now have an Opportunity of both seeing and speaking to my ador'd *Idalia*, to whom I resolv'd, let the Consequence be what it would, to discover who I was, if she was detain'd there against her Inclinations, as sometimes

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times the good Opinion I had of her led me to believe : I design'd to bear her off, tho' with the Hazard of my Life ; or if it were thro' Choice she had continued with you, to endeavour, by all the Arguments I was Master of, to persuade her to remove. — But, alas ! my Expectations in this, as in all other things, were frustrated, tho' I was in the House several Days, she kept so close in her Apartment, it was impossible for me even to get a Glimpse of her : And I was beginning to despair I ever should be so blest, when as I was sitting in the Hall, meditating to what little purpose was all the Pains I had taken, *Ardella* came to me, and bidding me follow her into the Garden, led me to that part of it which was most remote from the House, and taking me by the Hand, ' *Banno, (said she, for that was the Name I went by)* you pretend a great deal of ' Friendship to me, what would you do to prove ' the Reality of what you have profess'd ?

YOU may imagine I was not a little surpriz'd at her speaking in this manner ; but soon recollected my self enough to assure her, I would do any thing in my power. ' What I have to ' desire of you (*resumed she*) will not only be ' an Obligation to me, but also to yourself, if ' you are but possess'd of two Qualities necessary ' for the Undertaking ; they are Secrecy and Resolution : therefore, before you promise, examine your own heart, whether there is any ' thing in it which would tremble at the Performance of a Deed, perhaps, such as the World ' calls by the Name of bloody, — cruel, — ' barbarous, and such like Epithets, invented ' only to fright the ignorant from accomplishing ' their

' their Wishes, and cheat us into tame endu-
 ' ring.—— Weigh well, if you can boldly
 ' make your Fortune by one brave Blow, with-
 ' out a childish Repentance afterwards, which
 ' would undo both yourself, and those by whom
 ' you are employ'd.' I was too impatient to
 know what 'twas she meant to hesitate much
 what Answer to make, but immediately promi-
 sed to stick at nothing, not thinking my self ob-
 lig'd to a Performance, if it were either incon-
 sistent with my Honour, or Interest. — My
 ready Compliance made her take me for such a
 one as she wanted, and showing me a Purse of
 Gold, ' Look here ! *said she*, all this is yours
 ' to encourage you in the Undertaking ; but
 ' there are three times as much in store for you
 ' when you bring word 'tis done — But let me
 ' know it, *said I*, that I may haste to execute
 ' it.' —— ' I depend upon you, *answer'd she*,
 ' and hope you will be so much a Friend to your
 ' self as not to disappoint the good Opinion I
 ' have of you. — You must know there is a La-
 ' dy of the highest Quality in *Venice*, who has
 ' taken a Disgust to a Woman, and would wil-
 ' lingly have her dispatch'd into another World.
 ' She is at present in this House, but there are
 ' Reasons which make it not proper the Deed
 ' should be done here — but early in the Morn-
 ' ing — I will put you in a way. ——

T H E Horror which seiz'd my Soul at this
 monstrous Injunction, which by all Circumstan-
 ces I was certain my Sister was the Contriver of,
 was too great for Description ; but the Darkness
 (for it was Night) help'd me to conceal it from
 the Observation of this Wretch, and she bidding
 me

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me be up by Break of Day, went into the House, leaving me to ruminate on what I had promis'd to perform. In the midst of my Concern, for having a Sister oversway'd by her Passions to an Act so detestable, I rejoyc'd that I had it in my power to prevent the Perpetration of so black a Purpose, and spent best part of the Night in determining how I should contrive to preserve a Life, which I doubted not but her Malice would a second time attempt, if she shou'd know she had been disappointed in the first. At last I be-thought me of a Woman, who had formerly been a Nurse in our Family, and was now removed with her Husband to a little House a great distance from any Town; there I resolved to secure the designed Victim from any future Violence; and when I reflected on the Blessing this Chance would give me, I could scarce lament I had a Sister of so cruel a Disposition, since to her Barbarity I should be indebted for a Joy, which 'twas probable not all my own Assiduity, and constant Services, would ever have been able to obtain.

A S the unfortunate *Honorius* was in this part of his Relation, the intermitting Torture which had given him Liberty to utter thus much, return'd with treble Fury: He roar'd with Extremity of Anguish. — Nimble Twitches ran thro' all his Frame. — Convulsive every Nerve. — Sure at that time he must be possess'd with more than mortal Courage to sustain such Racks, else would he by some Act of Desperation have finished them at once. —

A S *Myrtano* was going on in condoling the Misery this unhappy Gentleman had endur'd, *Idalia*, not a little amaz'd to hear that the unknown Person, to whom she was so much oblig'd, was *Honorius*, had the greatest Impatience imaginable to know the end of this Adventure; and that he might the sooner come to a Conclusion, desired he would wave all the Particulars in what manner she had been preserv'd, and come to those of which she yet was ignorant.

M A D A M! reply'd *Myrtano*, he was not in a Capacity of relating much more than what I have recounted; there was in this last Fit so little Intermission of his Agonies, that he had only Space between them to run over, in as brief a manner as he could, his Behaviour to you in the Forest, and his conducting you to the House he had thought of for you; but as he was just going to mention in what part of the Country it stood, he was seized with another Pain, which was to that Violence that it entirely deprived him of his Senses, and from that time all he said was so unconnect and wild, that nothing was to be inferred from it. I was infinitely troubled when I found it was not in his power to give me any account how he came, after he had left you, to my House again, to receive that fatal Drug from the Hands of *Ardella*; but resolving at my Return to force the Knowledge from her, I left my Servants, who by this timewere all come back, to attend the Litter, while I posted home to secure her. She, who was far from imagining what had reach'd my Ears,

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Ears, came into the Room immediately on my calling for her, and was beginning with a well-acted Disquiet to tell me a long Story of your making your Escape unknown to her; but I was too full of Distraction both for your being gone, and the dreadful Mischief which by her means had fallen on *Honorius*, to endure to listen to her, and put a stop to her Discourse by telling her I was made acquainted with her horrid Actions; and accusing her both with the Murder of you, and the very Man whom she had brib'd to that inhuman Deed, gave her so terrible a Fright, that she immediately fell on her Knees, and confessed herself guilty. After which I oblig'd her to acquaint me with the Particulars of her Crime, and she recounted to me how, by the Instigations of *Donna Anonia*, she had given you a Letter, which was to make me appear guilty of the highest Baseness imaginable, and by the same cruel Woman's Orders had contriv'd your Death, and then that of the Person employ'd in it, fearing he might some time or other betray what he had done: But when I told her, him whom she had poysoned was *Don Honorius* the Brother of *Antonia*, and she saw him brought in, I thought the Creature would have died with Fear: She again threw herself at my Feet, and trembling, conjur'd me to permit her to make her Escape; but I would not grant her Request, resolving, if *Honorius* died, to give her up to Justice, and in the mean time had her confin'd in a Room on the Top of the House, whence it was impossible for her to get away, without the Knowledge of the Servant whom I ordered to keep the Key; but by what Insinuations I know not, she beguil'd him

to betray his Trust, and they both fled together; but where, I never could learn, nor indeed did I give myself much trouble about it, knowing if the Business should come before a Magistrate, there would appear so much Intricacy in the Affair, especially when *Antonia* interpos'd her Cunning, as the Case for her own sake exceedingly required her to do, he would be extreamly puzzled what Sentence to give. But to return to *Honorius*. When the Physician had examin'd his Pulse, and watched some Hours by him, and given proper Medicines to expel the Poison, he seem'd to be in great hope of saving him. *Antonia*, whom I immediately writ to, with an Account of what had happened, came to *Vicenza*; almost as much distracted, or feign'd to be so, for the Mischief she had caus'd, as her Brother was: But not to spin out my Narration beyond your Patience, after a prodigious deal of lingering Torment, he at last was out of danger, the Poison not happening to have been strong enough to seize the Seats of Life, tho' it miserably destroy'd the Outworks. He lost his Hair, Eyebrows, and the finest Set of Teeth that could be. — His Strength was very much decayed, and all the Vivacity and Gaiety of his Temper gone. Nothing of what he was remain'd, but his unextinguishable Passion for you, and that enabled him to take a Journey to the Place where he had left you, before he could get the Physician's Consent to venture a little Walk in the Garden; but contrary to all our Persuasions he went, tho' till his Return he made no Confident whither he was going, imagining, as he told me afterwards, that had I been appriz'd of his Design, my Passion would have

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have carried me there before him : And indeed he was not deceiv'd in his Conjecture ; no Consideration should have with-held me a Moment, had I known what Place *Idalia's* Presence blest, and to that end watch'd every unguarded Word his Frenzy utter'd, in hope of discovering the dear Secret ; but failing of it then, could not expect it at his Return of Reason. Never did I see a Man so oppress'd with Melancholly as he was when he came back from seeking you. He then related to me where he had left you, and your Removal from thence, none knew to what Place ; and lamented with so zealous a Concern the Improbability there was he ever should be so happy to see you more, that I, tho' his Rival, and brought into the same Misfortune by him, could not deny my Compassion to his Grief. — But why should I delay to tell you, that the Loss of you sat so near his Heart, that he grew weary of the World, resolv'd to appear in it no more, and enter'd into the Society of *Gray-Fryars*, of which there is a Convent at *Segondica*. I was pretty near bearing him Company, for *Antonia* finding all the soft Blandishments she made use of were ineffectual to work the End she aimed at, made an Application to the *Doge* : the great Interest her Uncle the *Count* had with him, engaged him to favour her Cause so far, as to leave me no other Choice than the Performance of my Contract with her, or go immediately into a Monastery, and by taking Orders set her at liberty to marry another. I will not trouble you with the Chagrin I was in at this arbitrary Decree, which yet I had no Appeal from. — You see me now her Husband. — Soon after I became so, Count *Miramont* died, and Ho-

honorius having forsook the World, the greatest part of the vast Possessions he was Master of fell to *Antonia*, on which Occasion we came to *Rome*, most of the Estate lying hereabouts: A Blessing, added he, little proportionable to that which Heaven has so unexpectedly favoured me with, the meeting here, the dear, the everlasting Mistress of my Soul, my never, never-to-be-forgotten *Idalia*.

HE clos'd this long Discourse with a tender Pressure of her Hand, and such an Infinity of soft Transport in his Eyes, as sufficiently assur'd her Marriage had made no Alteration in his Sentiments. But she, who expected to hear something more of what the Designs of *Honorius* had been, ask'd *Myrtano*, if he had never heard any mention of a Letter she had entrusted him with to her Father; which, after having begg'd her pardon for omitting that part of his Rival's Generosity, he inform'd her, that he had told him the Reason of his desiring her to write to *Don Bernardo*, was, that he might have a Pretence to wait on him, and declaring the Passion he long had for her, ask his Consent to make him happy; which if obtained, he would have return'd to her without his Disguise, and brought her back to *Venice* with an Equipage suitable to the Quality of *Don Bernardo's* Daughter, and *Honorius's* Wife. 'Tis much, said *Idalia*, that if he were possess'd of so sincere an Affection as what you represent, he discovered not himself before he left me, having done me a Service which he might well believe would entitle him to my Esteem. — The Reason he gave me for it, answer'd *Myrtano*

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‘tano bowing, is such a one as is infinitely glorious to me ; but I know not if you will pardon my repeating it. — He said, adorable *Idalia* ! that he found you too full of Tenderness for the happy *Myrtano*, to hope he should be able to find room in your Heart for any *second* Impression, till Time, and Absence, and your Opinion of my Infidelity, had help’d him to erase the *former*.’ *Idalia* could not forbear blushing at these Words, which put her so much in mind of the Extravagancies she had uttered in the Forest, little suspecting she had such a Witness of them. But she had a Person by her, who would not see her in that soft Confusion without taking his Advantage of it, and making use of all those tender Artifices which Love inspires to charm the listening Fair, he at last won her to confess that he was still as dear to her as ever : He would not leave the Chamber till she had promised to stay with him for some time, as at first she had made a Scruple of doing, since she imagin’d (as indeed it was natural enough to believe) *Antonia* would not only be excessively disquieted herself, but also contrive all the Means her Wit and Malice could furnish her with to render her so too ; nor did her Fears deceive her, never was a Family more distracted than that of *Myrtano*’s, the restless and indignant Temper of his Wife being by his keeping a watchful Eye over all her Actions prevented from bursting out in publick, shew’d itself in the most trivial Concerns. She seemed to make it her whole Study to disoblige him, and he on the other side heartily hating her, did all he could to break her Heart. The Servants were ever countermanded by the one, if about to do

any thing they were ordered by the other; *Myrtano* always exerting his Authority, would be obey'd, and *Antonia* was not of a Humour to endure it. — All their Days were past in Quarrels, and their Nights in fullen Discontent. — *Idalia* alone was uncontroll'd, and free from those Jars with which the Ears of every other Person in the House were grated. — None presumed to contradict her Will, and she had nothing to disturb her Repose but what she endured from the Reproaches of her own Meditations, for having been the Cause of so much Unhappiness to others. To make her Life more easy, the amorous *Myrtano* had prevailed on her to throw off her Disguise of Men's Clothes, and in Exchange for them had presented her with various Suits of the richest, and most becoming a young Lady could wear; and to prevent the Servants, or any other Person who had seen her in another Garb, from making any Constructions to her disadvantage on her Change of Habit, forc'd the haughty Soul of *Antonia* to submit so far to his Humour, as to own her still for a Relation of her's, who for some Reasons had for a time thought fit to disguise her Sex. — What a Stab this must be to a Wife, let any one judge. — But the Crimes she had been guilty of, in first conspiring against her Life, and afterwards in entertaining a Passion so contrary to her Matrimonial Vow, made it but just she should receive such Treatment: But as she was of a Nature too impatient to reflect on what she had done amiss, so she had also too much Pride to endure the Punishment without Agonies, which sometimes brought her into a Condition little differing from Madness. — She complained of
her

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her ill Fate, but had none to remedy it. — She curs'd, but had none to assist her in her desire of Vengeance. — Fancy cannot form an *Idea* of more consummate Wretchedness than what this Lady suffer'd, compell'd to *obey*, yet eager to *command* — wild to *proclaim* her Wrongs, yet obliged to call 'em *none*, lest by publishing her *Husband's* Faults she should give him a Pretence for exposing *her's*.

IDALIA all this while past her Hours in those Amusements in which her Soul most delighted; she listening to the incessant Vows, and soft Insinuations which daily fell from the enchanting Tongue of her ador'd *Myrtano*, rejoiced to find him guilty of no other Infidelity than what his Fate compelled him to, and transported that his Affections were rather heightened than diminish'd, and utterly forgetting the solemn Protestation she had made before she fled from *Vicenza*, never, on any Terms, to yield to see him more, or think of him but with Disdain and Hatred, a *Monastery* was now the least of her Desire; and tho he had not yet offer'd at any Freedoms more than Innocence would allow, there was a small Probability that he would always continue to put so great a Constraint on his Inclinations—yet did she either not consider it at all, or in so slight a manner as gave her no Pain—Those Apprehensions which had so much alarmed her, when, to preserve her Honour, she hazarded all the Dangers of the Sea, were now no more—Lull'd in the pleasing Lethargy of Love, Reflection slept, and all the vigorous Warnings of Virtue, Fame and Reputation, were in the soft Enchantment hush'd

hush'd to Peace—she saw nothing but *Myrtano*,—heard nothing but *Myrtano*—her Soul, all dissolved in tender Languishments, had no leisure for any other Contemplation—He soon perceived it, and with soothing Art by unperceiv'd degrees stole gently from one Liberty to another, till at last, almost unawares even to herself, she yielded to all his burning Passion aim'd at, and thought the guilty Joy sufficient Compensation for the Loss of Honour.

MYRTANO had an unfashionable Constancy in his Nature, which made him not esteem *Idalia* the less for her giving him this last and greatest Proof of the Tenderness she had for him—*Possession* was so far from *abating*, that it rather *increas'd* the Ardour of his Affections—he never saw her without new Desires, each Look express'd unsatiated Longings, and every Enjoyment was like the first, or more transporting. Thus for a time were both as blest as the Gratification of their utmost Wishes could make them, but guilty Pleasures are never of any long Continuance; the inconsiderate Heart, which, quitting *Virtue*, places its whole Felicity in *Love*, sooner or *later*, must confess the Error, and curse in unavailing Penitence, the luscious Crime which lured them on to Ruin. The Sense-enslaved *Myrtano*, and his unthinking Mistress, were not permitted to riot many Months in their unlicensed Raptures, before as dreadful, as unforeseen an Accident happen'd, which was the occasion of separating them for ever.

THE

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THE enraged *Antonia* perceiving it an Impossibility ever to regain the Esteem of her Husband, by the Measures she took, and disdainingly to make use of any softer Means, bent her whole Thoughts on Vengeance—the Contentment she saw in the Eyes both of him and *Idalia*, put her beyond all Patience—she could not bear it—and being, by *Myrtano's* Watchfulness, and Knowledge of her vindictive Nature, prevented from doing any Mischief to either of them, resolved to buy Revenge at any rate, she at last form'd a Design which she thought could not fail of answering her End—What is it that Desperation is not capable of performing?—Those who value not their own Lives, with Ease may reach that of another's—and *Death* to her was but a trivial Ill, in comparison with what she endured in Life—she was willing to plunge into Perdition herself, provided she could but drag the Persons she hated along with her. To facilitate her horrid Purpose, she affected to be much more satisfied in her Mind than of late she had been, and with an Air of Humiliation said to *Myrtano*, That being fully convinced that the Misfortune of estranging his Affections from her, had been wholly owing to her own ill Management, she was now struck with so sincere a Contrition for what she had done, that could she but obtain a Pardon from him and *Idalia*, she would forsake the World, and retire to a Cloyster, and by her future Acts of Piety and Devotion, endeavour to expiate for the Errors of the past. He was too well acquainted with her Art of feigning, to depend much on the Truth of what she said, but would

would not seem to question it, lest if she had really the Intentions she pretended, (as 'twas not impossible but she might) his Suspicion should throw her into her former Violence of Temper, and occasion a Change in her Resolution, than the Execution of which nothing could have given him a greater Satisfaction: He communicated what had been told him, and his Sentiments of it, to *Idalia*, who join'd in his opinion, that there was scarce a Hope she should in good earnest be so alter'd, and also that it was proper for 'em both however to counterfeit a Credulity, that by seeming unguarded, they might the better penetrate into her Designs. But that required more Skill than either of them were possess'd of, the subtle *Antonia* laid her Scheme too deep to be fathom'd by all their Artifices; she behaved in such a manner, that it was impossible not to believe her an entire Convert; she pray'd, fasted, wept, nay really sent to the Convent of *Pour Clairs*, entreating they would accept of her, which being granted, and every thing prepared for going, she begg'd that her Husband and *Idalia* would pass an Hour or two in her Apartment, and accept of a little Repast with her, before she took her everlasting Leave: she said she could not promise herself an entire Forgiveness of them, without they obliged her in this Request. Neither of them could handsomely refuse her, tho *Idalia* would have been better pleased to have been excused; but the Consideration that it was the last time she should ever be shock'd with her Presence, made her the more easily comply.

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A very noble Collation was provided, and *Antonia* still continuing to wear her Countenance of Mildness, taking up a large Silver Cup, which she had order'd to be fill'd with Wine—
' Here, Madam, *said she*, may all Offences be-
' tween us be for ever buried in Oblivion—
' and you (*pursued she, turning to Myrtano*) my
' once loved *Husband*, and I hope my everlast-
' ing *Friend*, tho in this World, Heaven, and
' my own Misfortunes, separate me from you,
' may we in another taste all those Joys which
' are denied me here—Pledge me, both of you,
' or I shall think you have but half forgiven
' those Faults which Passion, Youth, and Inad-
' vertency have made me guilty of.' *Myrtano*
could not hear these Words, which were ac-
company'd with a Shower of well-dissembled
Tears, without dissolving too ; and now fully be-
lieving she was in earnest, could not help pity-
ing her Condition—He took the Cup out of
her Hand with a deep Sigh, but being about to
drink, a Servant who stood at the Door observ-
ing all that pass, ran hastily to him, and snatch-
ing from his Lips the fatal Draught, cry'd,
' What is it you would do, Signior? This
' Wine is mingled with some pernicious Drug.'
' What means the Fellow ! (*interrupted he*) dost
' thou not see *Antonia* has drank of it?' ' But
' do not you (*resum'd the other*) I saw her when
' she believed no Eye but Heaven's was Wit-
' ness of the Deed, take from her Pocket a lit-
' tle Vial full of something, which I believe
' was Poison, and pour it in that Cup, then
' call'd for Wine, and mingled them together.'
' 'Tis false, (*cry'd Antonia*) 'tis false ; and thou,
' Myr-

' Myrtano, hast suborn'd this Villain to accuse
 ' me, on purpose to make me hateful to the
 ' World, and rob me of that Compassion which
 ' my Sufferings merit.— ' Hold, Madam (*said*
 ' Myrtano, *strangely amaz'd*) moderate your Pas-
 ' sion, if wrong'd, you shall have Justice. Tell
 ' me (*continued he sternly, to the Fellow*) by what
 ' means came you to see this Action of your
 ' Lady, which you say she did with so much
 ' Privacy.' I was coming into the Room (*re-*
 ' *ply'd he, with an assur'd Accent*) ignorant that
 ' any body was in it, to fetch something I had
 ' forgot, and left there, when I had lighted up
 ' Candles: but as I was opening the Door, I
 ' saw my Lady, without being seen by her, for
 ' her Back was towards me; but standing oppo-
 ' site to a great Glass and Candle by her, I had
 ' the opportunity of discovering what she was
 ' about—I plainly saw her mix the Liquors,
 ' which I should not have suspected to be Poi-
 ' son, had I not also heard her speak to herself
 ' these Words—*Revenge is more than Life*—and
 ' presently after, *I cannot feel the Pains of Hell,*
 ' *while I see them in 'em* (*said she*;) *Damnation*
 ' *will be Pleasure, if they share it with me.* This,
 ' Signior (*continued he, bowing*) was sufficient to
 ' make me fear she had something more in agi-
 ' tation than she pretended, and obliged me to
 ' watch to whom that Cup was offered.' ' O
 ' 'tis all a monstrous Lye (*interrupted she*) you
 ' see he contradicts himself; he says 'tis Poison,
 ' and that he watch'd to whom I offer'd it—
 ' Did I not myself first drink, and would I
 ' destroy myself?'—' I know not (*said Myr-*
 ' *tano*) to what Extremes you may have had
 ' recourse, but if you have here mixed any Ingre-
 ' dients

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‘dients unfit for me to take—thus I disappoint
‘your Aim.’ With these Words he took the
Cup out of the Fellow’s Hand, and dash’d all
that was in it on the Floor. This Action made
Antonia throw off the Mask of meek Humility,
and appear the Fury. ‘But I will not be dis-
‘appointed, cry’d *she*, *snatching a Sword which by*
‘*accident lay on the Window, and running at Ida-*
‘*lia*; nor Heaven nor Earth shall ward my
‘Vengeance here.’ But she soon found herself
mistaken, *Myrtano* was quick enough to wrest the
Weapon from her, with these words: ‘Vile
‘Woman! said he, now you appear yourself;
‘but as the shameful Passion you had for this
‘Lady, while you believed her in a Capacity
‘of returning it, preserved her once from my
‘mistaken Rage, so shall my Care both now
‘and ever shield her from your Malice.’ ‘And
‘must I then die alone (cry’d *she* in a distracted
‘Tone) must all I have done serve but to leave
‘you free for the Embraces of a Rival?—and
‘must she, that hated Cause of all my Misery,
‘be blest when I am no more?—O Torment
‘worse than Hell—snatch—snatch me, Fiends,
‘there’s not a Spirit damn’d among you feels
‘half my Pains—Yes, I confess I would have
‘poisoned both, and ’twas the only Joy
‘Thought could allow my lost, forlorn Condi-
‘tion, that I should see you, cursing each o-
‘ther in the Pangs of Death for those hot
‘Wishes which brought on your Ruin—then
‘sink together to the lowest Hell, where I
‘should follow, and be your Tormentor still.—
‘O! (continued *she*, endeavouring to fly at *Idalia*)
‘that vile Enchantress, whose bewitching Smiles
‘first taught my Soul to know an unchaste De-
‘fire,

'fire, had she but perished with me, I would
'have absolved my Fate of all Injustice.' In
this manner did she rave, till Don *Myrtano*,
thinking what was most proper to be done, after
having took the trembling *Idalia* out of the
Room, sent for Physicians to endeavour, if pos-
sible, to expel the envenom'd Draught before
it had operated too far. But they soon found
she had not drank a sufficient Quantity to en-
danger Life, tho it happen'd not thro Care, ha-
ving no other design than to die with those her
Revenge was so zealous to send out of the
World; knowing the very Manner of their
Deaths could not be kept a Secret, and that
the Law would not suffer such Murders to go
unpunish'd. In spite of the Impatience of her
Temper, which, longer than else it would have
been, protracted her Recovery, she was perfectly
well in a few Days; but this Adventure being
whisper'd about from one to the other (as in
such a Family it could not be otherwise) made
so great a noise in *Rome*, that it came at last to
the Ears of his Holiness: he had a particular re-
gard for *Myrtano*, on the account of his good
Qualities, and for *Antonia*, as she was Niece to
Count *Miramont*, for whom he had had a very
great Friendship; and being concerned to hear
of so unhappy a Disturbance between them,
sent for them to know the Truth of the Affair.
Myrtano would have gloss'd it over in as plau-
sible a manner as he could, but his enraged
Wife, whose Fury was not in the least abated,
rejoic'd in this Opportunity of exposing him
and *Idalia*, which she did in the most bitter
and invective Terms her Malice could invent:
and this Proceeding obliged him, in return, to
lay

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lay open all her Actions, her Intention to murder that Lady while at *Vicenza*, the base Contrivance of the Letter which drove her from that Place, the Poison which *Ardella* by her Orders gave the *unknown* Person, who proved to be her Brother *Don Honorius del Miramont*; her Passion for *Idalia* while she believed her to be a Man; and lastly, her Design of poisoning both him and her. So monstrous a Catalogue of Vices turn'd the Holy Examiner intirely against her, he could no longer endeavour to persuade them to a Reconciliation, and told *Antonia* she was a Woman of too dangerous a Disposition to be left at her own Liberty, and therefore order'd she should be forthwith confin'd for Life in that very Convent of *Pour Clairs*, which she had pretended to go to out of Devotion. As for *Myrtano*, he chid him a little for giving cause of Provocation, and told him he must resolve to part with *Idalia*, it being consistent with neither of their Reputations to live together; and that it was not only the Ruin of their own Souls to continue in that Course of Life, but also of *Antonia's*, who would never be a thorough Convert till she was eased of the Torments of Jealousy: He closed the pious Exhortations he had made as *Priest*, with a positive Command as *Pope* and Supreme Dictator, that *Idalia* should quit his House immediately, and from that moment he should refrain her Company. This last Sentence afforded some Contentment to the restless Hate of *Antonia*, and she obey'd her own with less Reluctance, as sensible they would not be less miserable in being separated from each other, than she was

PART III. H

in the Disappointment of the Revenge she purposed.

BUT what Tongue is able to express the Despair the poor *Idalia* fell into, when *Myrtano* brought her home these doleful Tidings? At first he had power only to inform her with his Eyes that he had something fatal to unfold, but the dreadful Secret must be told, and bursting Sighs, half Words, and broken Sentences, at last made her know the worst——she wept, swoon'd, almost dy'd away, while he was speaking. Nor were his Agonies inferior to those which she endured: but there was no resisting a Power, such as that which had decreed their Misfortune, at least while they continued at *Rome*——all that remained to prop up falling Hope, was a Promise he made her of removing as soon as he could dispose of what Effects he had there, either out of the *Pope's* Dominions, or to some remote part of 'em, whence no Intelligence of their Behaviour might reach his knowledge. This comforted her a little, and she went to a House where he had provided her a Lodging, and Servants to attend her. It happen'd to be in a very pleasant part of the City, next door to a Monastery of *Benedictines*, among whom being a great number of Ladies of the best Families in *Rome*, he hoped by being acquainted with them, and visiting there sometimes, she might find some Alleviation to her Sorrows. It was some time before she could bring herself even to wish to receive any Consolation, but being by his daily Importunities (for he constantly writ to her) prevailed on to divert herself by all the means that were in her power,

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power, she one day took a little Walk in the Cloyster Gardens; while she was there, the Bell rung, and having a little Curiosity to see the Nuns at Prayers, went into the Chapel, where almost the first she cast her Eyes on was a Face perfectly known to her, tho she could not presently recollect where she had seen it; but going a little nearer, she soon knew the Lady to be the beautiful *Bellraizia*, who, she thought, had perished in the Storm from which herself had so narrowly escaped. The high Esteem she had conceived for her, made her extremely glad to see her safe, but the finding her in that Society, so contrary to the Religion she had been educated in, and her Engagements with *Abdomar*, gave her an adequate Concern, not doubting but that unhappy Gentleman was lost. She long'd impatiently for the end of the Ceremony, that she might be informed what had occasion'd so strange an Alteration, and singling herself from the Crowd, and standing in a Corner of the Chapel, as near as she could to that Place where the *Nuns* go out, she gave her a little pluck by the Sleeve as she pass'd by; which the fair *Nun* perceiving, made a stop, and looking on *Idalia*, immediately knew her. There pass'd several Congratulations between them for their mutual Deliverance from so imminent a Danger; but the Place they were in not allowing any long Conversation, *Idalia* could be made acquainted with no more at that time than that *Abdomar* had also been preserved; and the being told this was no small Addition to the Surprise she had been in before, which the beautiful *Convert* easily discerning, told her with a Smile her Wonder should be satisfied, if she

would favour her with a Visit the next Day, which *Idalia* assuring that she would, took her leave.

A T the time appointed she enquired for her at the Grate, where a Couple of young *Devotees* were standing, and was answer'd by one of them, that as for *Bellraizia*, they knew nothing of her by that Name, but that a Lady of a foreign Nation had lately entred herself among them, which 'twas probable was the same she enquired for, for she had been but lately christen'd, and was call'd *Theresa*. *Idalia* imagining it might be she, desired to see her, and the others very obligingly ran to fetch her, who was indeed the same. After a little Discourse on ordinary Affairs, *Idalia* expressing her Impatience to know what had been the occasion of this sudden Turn in her Principles, as well as Affairs, entreated she would give a Solution to what at present appear'd so great a Riddle: ' I must be more rude and unpolite
' than the most ignorant of the Country I came
' from, (*answer'd the lovely Profelyte*) if I should
' refuse to satisfy a Demand which so obliging-
' ly testifies you take some little Interest in my
' Concerns, and have not forgot the Friendship
' we promised to each other, at a time when
' neither of us expected to meet in any other
' Place than that which we then were in. But
' because to relate only what has befallen me
' since I had the Happiness of seeing you, would
' render the History of my Life imperfect, if
' you please I will run over, with as much Bre-
' vity as the several Incidents will permit, the
' remainder of those Misfortunes, which the
' Tem-

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‘ Tempest oblig’d me to break off.’ *Idalia* thanking her with a low Bow for the Trouble she was about to give herself, sat down to listen to what she said, which was in this manner.



The Continuance of the History of *Abdomar and Bellraizia.*

I Was confined (*said she*) in the manner I told you for several Days before I saw any Person from whom I could learn any News how *Abdomar* had been disposed of; which gave me a rack of Thought infinitely superior to what I felt on my own account. The first that visited me was *Zatilda*, enjoin’d by her Father, and mine, and *Mulyzeden* (as she did not fail of letting me know) to dive into my Sentiments, and find out if possible the Truth of the whole Affair between me and *Abdomar*: because the Posture he had been found in by the *Prince*, made them all positive that I had been made acquainted with his Passion. And nothing, she told me, could convince them that I had not only listned to, but also allow’d of his Courtship, if I did not instantly consent to ratify the Contract with *Mulyzeden*. You may believe ’twas with an inexpressible Trouble she brought me these Tydings, not doubting but that I should be oblig’d to comply, to the eternal Ruin of her Hopes; but I assur’d her to the contrary by all the Asseverations I could make; protesting I would rather die than make her so unhappy, if no other Obstacle but my Friendship to her had inter-

pos'd ; but as I lov'd the charming *Abdomar*, and was beloved by him with an equal Height of Passion, tho' his Generosity obliged him to conceal it from me, no Threats, no Tortures should force me to act so contrary both to my own Wishes and theirs, who of all the World were dearest to me. My renewing the Vows I had before made her on this score, dissipated great part of the Chagrin she brought with her ; but, alas ! she had it not in her power to give any Relief to mine, having been able to learn nothing concerning *Abdomar*, but that he was in close Prison, and that *Mulyzedon* was yet irresolute what Sentence to pass on him. All the dreadful Examples of which I had heard, or read of jealous Love, came into my Head the moment she told me this : I fancy'd I saw him bleeding, dying, for my sake, and begg'd *Zatilda* for her own sake (since nothing else could give her the Happiness she wish'd) and for the sake of us all, to permit me to reveal the Secret of her Passion for *Mulyzedon* : ' That (said I) once known, will oblige the King not to take it ill that I refus'd to do, what done would make his Daughter wretched. — My Father will not dare to force my Inclinations against the Interest of his Princess, and *Mulyzedon* cannot but glory in the Exchange. — All of us may be happy in our several Wishes, would you consent.' — But all I could urge was in vain to win this modest Princess to give me the Liberty I ask'd ; she swore rather to die than proffer Love, and we parted without being able to resolve on any thing for our common Satisfaction.

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IT must be only the Imagination of a Person involv'd in the same Perplexities I was, can figure an *Idea* of what I endur'd in the Reflection of my unhappy State ; but as I was sitting alone, after *Zatilda* had left me, the Windows being open for Coolness, I saw something fly in at one of them, and fall at my Feet ; stooping to take it up, I perceived it was a Paper, which hastily opening, I found it contained these Lines, which I too often repeated to forget, and were in this manner.

To the Divine BELLRAIZIA.

I Believe it needless to inform you, that the Posture I was found in by my Prince, has occasioned a Jealousy of me : But I confess I have not Generosity enough to suffer so great a Misfortune as the Loss of his Friendship without wishing to be pity'd by her, for whom I am content to endure greater Ills. *Mulyzed* accuses me, most excellent Princess, of adoring you ; and, oh ! I acknowledge the involuntary Crime. But as my Lips have ne'er offended by any presumptuous Declarations, I hope, tho' he cannot, Goodness like your's will pardon a Transgression, which I doubt not but I have as many Sharers in, as there are Souls to be sensible of your Perfections. I am but this moment released from my Confinement, and in a few Hours must leave Barbary for ever. All I entreat, for my self, is your Forgiveness, and that you will believe the Crime, for which I am banish'd, I never should have had the Boldness to reveal, had I not been assured you would have known it without me.

MY next Request, is, that you will do that Justice to my Prince, which his unbounded Passion, and

a Million of excellent Qualifications, make him merit : And my last to the Gods, that the choicest Blessings in their power to give, may ever be the Portion of you both, whatever is decreed for

The Unhappy ABDOMAR.

IN what manner shall I make you sensible of the tender Languishments which at the reading this took up my Soul ? — But 'twas not long that soft Confusion lasted, the Reflection that he was going, that I should never see him more; embittered all the Sweets which the Contemplation of so generous a Passion had afforded. — But why should I detain you with the particular Emotions which agitated me according as the different Thoughts rose in me. — In fine, I lov'd, and could not bear to lose him. — All the Remonstrances of Honour, Grandeur, Reputation, were silenced by the more powerful Calls of Love; since he was banish'd, I resolv'd to be the Partner of his Exile, whatever should ensue. — You'll say, considering the Circumstance I then was in, this was a Resolution which promised little Facility in the Execution; yet difficult as it was, the Passion which prompted it, inspired me also with a Contrivance to perform it. I bribed one of my Women to procure me a Suit of Clothes, such as our *Negro* Slaves are wont to wear, and oyling my Face, and afterwards rubbing it over with some Powder, made of the Shells of Chesnuts, and tying up my Hair close to my Head, and covering it with a little taffety Cap, made my self appear so like one of those I design'd to pass for, that I had not the least Fear of being suspected. I at
so

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so prevailed on the same Woman, whom I had made my Confident, to put on my Clothes ; and if any Person from the *King*, Prince *Mulyzeden*, or my Father, should happen to be sent soon after I was gone, to lie down on the Bed, feigning an Indisposition, that they might not discover it was any other than my self that spoke ; and exacted a solemn Vow from her, that whatever happened, she should not confess she knew any thing of my Escape, to any other Person but *Zatilda*. Every thing answered my Wish ; *Abdomar* having leave till the next Morning to prepare for his Journey, I mingled with his Train, and found Means to be entertained among them. I now thought my self most happy, so easily can Love answer for the want of all things else ; not that I was so abandoned to Modesty as to discover myself to him. I had run such Risks to follow ; no, I proposed no other Satisfaction in this Flight than to avoid *Mulyzeden*, and enjoy the Presence of the Man I loved ; and indeed it was a Felicity unconceivable that I took in thus, unknown by him, observing all his Motions, in which I found nothing but what served more to encrease my Admiration and Esteem.

BUT, alas ! this Scene of innocent Delight met with a sudden Interruption : We had not travelled above fifty Miles from the Court of *Barbary* before we were overtaken, and seized by a Party of the King's Horse sent after in pursuit of us. *Abdomar* demanding the Reason, was answered by the Captain, That he must bring back the Princess *Bellraizia*, or discover where she was, since she had made her Escape, and 'twas believed by his Instigations.—*Abdomar* exprest

expressed the highest Concern, as well as Astonishment, at hearing this; but protested, as very well he might, that he was entirely innocent of it: But this could not serve his turn, the Captain was obliged to obey Orders, and we were all brought back, and *Abdomar* was immediately conducted into the Council Chamber, where all that had Interest in it were assembled to examine him concerning me. — The Horrors I endured while this lasted, were such as it would be impossible to describe. I imagined that his Innocence would stand him in but little stead to defend him against a Party, who were resolved to think him guilty; nor was I mistaken, they disbelieving all he said, and imagining that if I were not really in his Company, it was on his account I had left *Barbary*, and that there was some Place agreed on for our meeting, ordered he should be rack'd to make him confess. This Doom being past, he was brought out, and the Sight of those Men by him, whom I knew to be the common Executioners of those kind of Torments, made me know to what he was decreed; and wild with the Horror of his suffering them on any account, much more on mine, I lost all Sense either of Shame or Danger to my self, and running in amongst the Guards, cry'd out to them, 'And is it for the Princess *Bellraizia* that the noble *Abdomar* must endure the Rack? — If so, let him be remanded back; I can produce the Princess, and clear his Innocence.' Every body that stood near enough to hear me, were strangely alarm'd at what I said; and some of them, running to the Council Chamber, informed the King of what I said; on which, the
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Torments decreed for *Abdomar* were suspended, and my self and he introduc'd.

Y O U may believe how great a Damp 'twas to me, when I saw the *King*, my Father, *Mulyzed*, and all the Prime of the Nobility, before whom I must either discover what I had done, and the Reasons which occasioned it, or suffer the whole Weight of their Indignation to fall on him, who was infinitely dearer to me than either Life or Honour : Therefore being demanded what I had to offer in the Defence of *Abdomar*, and what I knew of *Bellraizia*, I boldly answered what they ask'd with another Question, which was, That if I proved the Princess's Flight unknown to *Abdomar*, whether they had any other Crimes to accuse him of ? And all of them assuring me, that if I did so, he was entirely at his Liberty, nothing farther having been alledged against him ; I pull'd off my Cap, and letting my Hair fall about my Shoulders : ' See here then, (*said I, with a Courage which I have been since surprized at my self*) ' See here that *Bellraizia* whom you seek, and ' whom nothing but the Guilt of permitting an ' innocent Person to suffer for a Crime she alone ' is guilty of, should have obliged to have discovered herself either to you, or any other ! ' The Amazement the whole Assembly was in, gave me leave to make a farther Explanation of my Meaning, and I recounted to them the Aversion I had for *Mulyzed*, my Passion for *Abdomar* even before I had the least Hope he would return it, and in fine the whole Truth of my Proceedings, bating what concern'd *Zatilda* ; and indeed it had happened much better, if I had

had also discovered that, but she had bound me in so strict a Promise, that I durst not break through it without her Consent. To give you a Description of the different Agitations which I saw in the Countenances of the three I had most reason to observe, the *King*, my Father, and the Prince, would be too tedious; so I shall only say, the Fury which I saw in one, could be equall'd only by the others. All were alike incens'd, tho' for contrary Reasons.

I could not be a Judge in what manner *Abdomar* heard so unexpected a Discovery, both because he stood a little behind me, and also that Shame would have prevented me from looking on him with that Earnestness which I did on the others. But if one may form a Judgment by the Passion he has since proved he was inspired with, his Emotions must at that time be more than ordinary. But to return to my Relation: My Father was the first that broke Silence, and looking on me with an Eye that sparkled with Indignation, 'It is not (said he) this shameful accusing of yourself that ought to skreen that Traytor from the hands of Justice?—' Yes, (interrupted Mulyzedem, no less fiercely) 'tis plain he is guilty; for tho' the Princess has so ingloriously condescended to yield to his Desires, I never can believe she would be brought to it without Professions, such as she thought merited her Compassion.' 'Tis false (resum'd I, enraged that all I could do was like to be ineffectual;) and thou, unbelieving Prince! deservest not to be blest'd with such a Friend as *Abdomar*.' Then I pluck'd out of my Pocket the Letter he had thrown

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thrown in at my Window, which was a sufficient Testimony that he never had so much as declared his Passion for me, much less had importuned me to go with him, to back what I said. The Princess *Zatilda*, who hearing what had pass'd the first time that *Abdomar* had been examin'd in the Council, and well knowing he had no share in my Flight, stept into the Room to clear him of this Charge, and immediately knowing me, vouch'd the Truth of what I had alledged. All these Witnesses inclin'd the King, who was a perfect Lover of Justice, however prejudicial it might be to his Interest, to recall the Sentence he had pass'd on *Abdomar*; at which *Mulyzedon*, whose Rage was nothing abated by the Knowledge that what I had done had proceeded only from my own inconsiderate Passion, and thinking himself affronted on all sides, turning to the King, 'Your Majesty, said he, 'may, whenever you please, revoke your own 'Decrees, but neither Heaven nor Earth shall 'debar me from the Prosecution of mine—I 'have vow'd the Traytor's Death, and thus I 'make it good.' In speaking these words he ran at *Abdomar* with all the Fierceness of an inveterate Malice, but that injured Gentleman did not now, as he had done before, bow to receive the Wound he offer'd; but snatching a Sword from a Lord that stood near him, put himself in a posture of Defence as soon as he perceived the Prince's Design: 'Time was '(said he) I would have welcom'd Death, but 'now have cause to value Life, and must, and 'will defend it for the Divine *Bellraizia*, tho 'against you, next to her dearest to my Soul.— 'Villain, thou lyest (resumed the Prince;) nor 'shall

‘ shall thy Flattery move me to Forgiveness.’ The Guards, which waited at the Door, were call’d in immediately, and having parted them by the King’s Command, bore *Abdomar* to the same Prison he had been in before, not that he was to be treated any longer as a Criminal, but his Majesty thought it most convenient for his Safety, to secure him there from the Fury of *Mulyzeden*. He made me a low Reverence, with such an inexpressible Tendernefs in his Eyes, so soft an Exstasy for what I had declared, as was beyond what any Words could have acknowledged; but I, tho I observed it with as much Rapture as my Circumstances would allow, was in too much Confusion to make any Return to the endearing Charm: But when he was gone, and I was left alone to the Upbraidings of the whole Assembly (for there was not one there who did not blame my Conduct) what did I not endure! None but *Zatilda* took my part, and endeavour’d to excuse my Proceedings, by pleading the Force of that unconquerable Passion which had been the cause of them; but she was immediately silenced by her Father asking her how she came to be so well acquainted with Emotions so contrary to Reason, and to Honour. But Prince *Mulyzeden*, who still loved me, entreated them to cease any further Reproaches, and told me, that if I would permit him to espouse my Cause, by giving him that Happiness my Vows had long since made his Due, all I had done for *Abdomar* should be forgot. ‘ No, Sir (*said I*) I have not gone so far in the Race of Passion to go back—I own your Generosity, but ’tis *Abdomar* alone I can love.’—As I was proceeding, my Father interrupted

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interrupted me, crying out, ' Degenerate Girl !
' unworthy the Regard of this noble Prince—
' but in the Punishment I will inflict on thee,
' he shall perceive how I resent the Indignity
' thou hast offer'd him—Here (*continued he, to*
' *some of the Guards*) bear her to her Apartment,
' and let her be shifted of these dishonourable
' Rags—these shameful Witnesses of her Folly.'
The Princess *Zatilda* had leave to accompany
me, but had it not in her power to give me
much Consolation, or to receive it herself; and
I believe never two had more Distraction in
their Thoughts than we—I again endeavour'd,
by all the Arguments I was Mistress of, to per-
suade her to permit me to reveal the kind
Thoughts she had of *Mulzyeden*, but she was
still obstinate, and would listen to nothing I
could say on that score, and conjured me afresh
never to let the Secret slip; but Providence
brought it to light without my Breach of Pro-
mise, and we might all have been happy, if
Modesty, which in others is the greatest Vir-
tue, had not, by its Excess, been her Enemy,
and disappointed the Aim of Heaven. One of
my Women, who, it seems, had been appointed
to attend me only as a Spy, listen'd to the Con-
versation we had together, and related it to
both our Fathers, which you may guess was no
small surprize to them; but mine was so much
vexed at it, as believing this would certainly
take away all hope of my ever being Princess of
Fez, that crossing his Ambition, he fell into a
Fever, of which he died. The King set me
at liberty immediately after his Death, but
would not disoblige the Prince so much as to
give me leave to marry *Abdomar*, who was still
in

in Confinement—*Zatilda* was yet ignorant that her Secret had been discover'd; and the *King* perceiving that *Mulyzedon* still had the same Passion for me as ever, knew not which way to bring it about: but at last, finding his Daughter grow extremely ill (as that poor Princess had ever since been consuming with inward Agonies) he propos'd the Matter to him. Never Man had a greater share of Generosity than that unhappy Prince, and he could not hear he was beloved by a Princess whom it was not his destiny to love, without an Infinity of Concern; but nothing of those Sentiments, which were requisite to make her happy, however the tender Concern which fill'd his Soul, might possibly have ripened into something more to her advantage, had she not put herself past the Power of receiving it. The Discourse the King had with him on this score, was in the Palace-Garden, in that very *Grotto* where I had made the Discovery of the Passion which *Abdomar* had for me: The ill-fated *Zatilda* happened to be in one part of it, while they were in the other, and overheard all that pass'd; and overcome with Shame that the Secret was discovered, and guessing by the Answers which *Mulyzedon* made, that she was like to receive no other Benefit by it than the Compassion of the Man she loved, resolv'd to put an end to the Miseries she had endured, and full of Desperation, plung'd that moment a Dagger into her Breast. The Noise which her Fall made among the Trees, and twisted Branches, of which the *Grotto* was compos'd, oblig'd her Father, and the Person for whose sake she had done this, to rise from their Seats, and look what 'twas occasioned it.—It would be

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be needless to repeat the Lamentations of a most tenderly loving Father, to find his only Child weltring in her Blood, and breathing her last ; or those which *Mulyzeden* made, when he reflected he had been the Cause, tho' an innocent one : You may easily imagine they were suitable to the Occasion, and to the Characters of the Persons concerned in it. The most eminent Surgeons were sent for, but the fatal Weapon had reached too far, and she lived no longer than to receive some Words of Compassion from him, who tho' he could not love, protested after he would gladly have exchanged Conditions, and bought the Preservation of her Life at the Expence of his own.

W H E N she was gone, there was nothing in the Coast of *Barbary* which could induce me to stay in it : And having obtained Leave, I retired into the Country to a Castle which had been my Father's. *Mulyzeden* would not offer to oppose it, nor had made any Visits to me since the Death of *Zatilda*, because he would give no Umbrage to the *King* ; and I hoped my absenting my self, fully convincing him that I never would be his, would oblige him to return to *Fez*, or at least to set *Abdomar* at liberty, who, I was confident, as soon as he was so, would find some means to let me know it. But, alas ! that too constant Prince could not forget his Passion, all my Unkindness had not the Power of effacing my Idea in his Soul ; he continued to love me with an Ardency which was unvanquishable but by Death, which at last he yielded to : and sure if any one ever had a broken Heart, he had, for he died of no other Disease but Grief.

I have often wondred, that, considering the Sweetness of his Disposition, he had all this while kept *Abdomar* in custody; but Jealousy, and disappointed Love can know no Medium in their Rage: The Moment he was dead, the King gave Orders that he should be discharged, but desired he never would be seen in *Barbary*. I had an immediate Account of all things, and met him in the way: After a thousand mutual Demonstrations of the tenderest Affection, we exchanged Vows never to be parted more; and neither *Barbary* nor *Fez* promising much Security, he bethought him of buying a Ship, and living a Rover on the Sea, that being a Province where no mortal Prince had Power to drive us from: We had been eight Months without ever setting our Feet on Land, when that dreadful Storm, in which we thought you lost, shewed us that Heaven denied its Approbation of our Love. However it prevail'd not to separate us. Clasp'd in each others Arms, we resolv'd, since there was no hope of living, to die together; but when we thought ourselves most in danger, we were most secure: that part of the Ship, in which we were, was that which was dash'd against the Rock; and the other being rent forcibly away, this seemed fastened to it, and the Storm immediately ceasing, we remained in our tatter'd Castle, till some Boats coming to our Relief, carry'd us safe on Shore.

IN the House we were directed to, there was a Fryar, certainly the most holy of his Order: Being informed of part of our Story by *Abdomar* and my self, he told me very freely, that the Breach of my Vows to *Mulyzeden* had drawn

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drawn the Vengeance of Heaven on me ; and then began to argue with so divine a Zeal on the mistaken Precepts of our Religion, that in a few Days he won us both to embrace the Christian Faith, which my Ancestors had so shamefully abjur'd. To expiate the Sin of living so long in a State of Infidelity, he told us it was necessary to do something more than a bare Acknowledgment we had been in an Error ; and, in fine, in spite of the unbated Passion we still had for each other, he wrought on us both so far as to prevail on us to take Orders : And by mortifying our Desires in the tenderest part, endeavour to appease the Offences we had been guilty of. *Abdomar*, as well as my self, submitted to it, and he is now with this good Fryar among the *Capuchins*, and I am settled here, where so unexpectedly I have had the good Fortune to meet a Person in whose Conversation I promise my self much Comfort.

THE charming *Convert* here finished her Narration, and *Idalia* reflecting on the Instability of that Felicity which only Love bestows, began to grow exceeding melancholy, which the other observing, entreated to know the Cause, and also what had befallen her since their Separation ; which she complying with, let the new-made Christian know, that there were both Misfortunes and Inadvertencies occasioned by Passion, as great as what she had experienced.

THE visiting this Lady was all the Consolation *Idalia* had in her Separation from *Myrtano* ; but she being soon after taken ill of so malignant

lignant a Fever that it was thought dangerous to approach her, she not only lost the Company of one whose Wit and Good-Humour often diverted her from any despairing Thoughts, to which of late she was too liable; but also of one whose Strictness to the Principles she had embrac'd, might in time have won her to a Belief that true Happiness was only to be found in Virtue. And indeed in the Circumstance she then was, never Woman stood more in need of an Adviser: the living in the manner she had done with *Myrtano*, his Wife's Desperation, and the Pope's Decree, had made too great a noise in *Rome* not to make her be publicly remark'd; and emboldened by the Knowledge that she had been a *Mistress*, brought all the young and gay part of the Town to solicit for the same Favour: nay, some of them used so little Ceremony as to make her acquainted with their Designs on the first Visit, and others treating her as a *Courtezan*, demanded to know her Price. Some would agree with her for a Month, others for a Week; all the Insults that Women of that Profession are liable to, she met with; which, considering the Haughtiness of her Disposition, could not be expected but to drive her to Extreames. She writ daily to *Myrtano*, conjuring him to make what Expedition he could to leave *Rome*; and he continued to assure her, he was as impatient as herself: but things not being ready so soon as she expected, she grew transported and wild with the daily Affronts she received, and was ready to lay violent Hands on her own Life, rather than endure them longer. She began to curse the Cause which had reduced her to a Condition, such as could give room for Liberties so contrary

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to what she had been us'd to receive, and could so ill bear. — She wanted Revenge on all who durst to use her in this manner. — And not having it in her power, was ready to burst with inward Spleen and stifled Indignation : In this enraged Temper, happening to look out of her Window, she saw a young *Chevalier* pass by, whom imagining she had seen before, she looked more earnestly at, and soon discovered it to be *Florez*, the Villain who had first betray'd her from her Father's House, and been the Cause of all her Woe : A sudden Thought came into her head at sight of him ; to be revenged on him for all, she sent a Servant after immediately, to watch where he went, which being informed of, she sat down, and disguising her Hand as much as possible, writ to him in this manner.

TO DON FLOREZ.

A *Chevalier*, so accomplished as you, cannot be surprized to be told the Impression you have made on a Heart who pretends to a Capacity of distinguishing. — But I will not go about to tell you how much I am influenced by your Perfections, till I see how you approve the Conquest you have made over me : If you have an Hour to spare, bestow it this Evening in the long Walk behind the Benedictine Nunnery, and just about the Close of Day you shall meet

Your enamour'd

Incognita.

SHE did not doubt but the Vanity of his Disposition would make him swallow the Bait she

she had prepared for him, and sent it by a Servant, charging him not to discover either her Name, or where she lived, if *Florez* should enquire, as 'twas probable he would. But the Fellow, who was hired by *Myrrano* to attend her, and knew very well it was to him she was indebted for a Support, thought it a monstrous Infidelity to his Lord; and instead of delivering it to *Florez*, carried it directly to him: The Astonishment with which he read it, is not to be expressed; but resolving to inform himself to what Lengths the Perfidy he imagined her guilty of would carry her, he muffled himself up in his Cloak, and went himself at the appointed time to the Place of Assignment, where he had not waited long before he perceived her coming. There was so little difference in their Stature, that she might be easily deceived; and coming near him, 'I believe, Signior, said she, you are the Person I would speak with: Are you not called Don *Florez*?' 'I am (reply'd *Myrrano* in a low and feign'd Voice.)' 'You had a Letter (resumed she, drawing a Dagger, and striking it with all her Force into his Breast, before he had Opportunity to discover who he was) and now I give a Present such as your Villany deserves.' She had Opportunity to say no more, he falling, immediately cry'd out, 'Oh *Idalia*! what have you done!' — These Words, the Voice, and a closer Observation, made her know to whom she had given the Blow; but all that can be conceiv'd of distracting Grief, of Horror without a Name, was short of what she felt at this amazing Sight. She tore her Hair and Face, rav'd, stamp'd, curs'd Fate, and scarce spar'd Heaven in the Extremity of her Anguish.

She

The Unfortunate Mistress. 135

She threw herself upon his bleeding Body, and kiss'd a thousand times the Wound she had made. — But this affording but little Satisfaction to the Racks of Thought which at this shocking Moment hurry'd her wild Brain, she started up, and snatching the Dagger, plung'd it thro' her Heart. He had just power to open his Eyes, and see the dreadful Reparation she had made him, and then clos'd them for ever : She lived some Hours to relate what she had done, and the Cause that moved her to it, to some Persons whom the Exclamations she made drew thither ; but not long enough to see the Justice of Heaven executed on *Florez*, who being fled from *Venice* for a Murder he had been guilty of, was discovered at *Rome*, and there apprehended, and on the account of many other base Actions, wholly friendless, he suffered the Law, and died as much unpitied, as *Myrtano*, and his unfortunate Mistress, were the contrary.

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It wounds him not so deep, nor hits so sure.
Congreve.*

10 JU 68

8

LETTERS

FROM A

LADY of QUALITY

TO A

CHEVALIER.

Translated from the FRENCH.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

The Second Edition.

To which is added,
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LETTERS

FROM A

LADY OF QUALITY

TO

CHRYSLER

Translated from the French

By Mrs. M. M. M.



A DISCOVERY

IN THE

OF A

DISCOVERY

IN THE

OF A

DISCOVERY

IN THE

OF A

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IN THE



THE
P R E F A C E.



*THE Rush of Winds,
which shake the aspiring
Cedar, spare the hum-
ble Reed: I am too
safe, in an insignificant Lowness, to
fear the Blasts of Envy, if the un-
questionable Judgment of those Per-
sons, who encourag'd me to under-
take the Translation of the follow-
A 2 ing*

ing Sheets, were not a sufficient Protection from whatever Malice or Ill-Nature might suggest; and I should not have troubled my Reader, with offering any thing in my own Defence, if the liberty I have taken, in many Places, of adding, and in others of diminishing (where I thought so doing would render the whole more entertaining) had not made it highly necessary. I am very sensible that, to those who consult the French, what I have done will appear to be more properly call'd a Paraphrase than a Translation; and perhaps, may be judg'd rather to proceed from a want of a true Knowledge of my Author, than any Amendment I could propose by making Alterations: but I hope that Curiosity, which leads them to such an Exami-

Examination, will be accompany'd with an impartial Consideration, that I have, in every Letter, kept close to the Business of the Original, and that I have made it my Care not to exceed the Meaning, wherever I have heighten'd the Expression, as well as not to retrench any thing but what was entirely superfluous. In Attempts of this kind the End seldom answers the Pains; People are, generally speaking, either so great Admirers of the past, or so little inclinable to favour the present, that all the Beauties, if there are any, are ascrib'd to the Original, and only the Imperfections fall to the share of the Translator: But I am not of a Humour to make myself very unhappy by such a Reflection. If those few I wish to please
are

(vi)

are satisfy'd, I shall not ask the
Question, whether it be with mine
or the French Author's part of the
Performance ; any more than I shall
be solicitous what Opinion the rest
of the World may have of it alto-
gether.



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LETTERS

F R O M A

Lady of Quality

T O A

C H E V A L I E R.



LETTER I.



OTHING could have con-
vinced me there was a Charm
beyond your Conversation, till I
received your obliging Letter
this morning ; which, too much for my
Repose, assures me, that the more one
permits one's-self to know you the more

2.

one

one shall find to admire, and that the Idea of such Excellencies as you are Master of, cannot be received at once. Is it to your *Love*, or to your *Wit*, I am indebted for the Tenderness of your Expressions?—But 'tis easy to guess what Answer you would make to such a Question; and if I call my own Heart to be the Judge, I know not how it could determine, without doing a Violence either to my Duty, or my Inclination.—My Virtue—my Discretion command me to think no otherwise of the fine things you say to me, than as the Effects of a Gallantry incident to your Humour, and which another Object might inspire as well as I. But while I am thus resolving, Sentiments of a far different nature check the Severity of these, and, with their soft Insinuations, half persuade me to believe you find something in me capable of creating the most serious Regard.—If it be so—if Time, and a thousand Services, confirm this last Opinion to be true, to what Extremes should I be driven?—How should I proceed in an Affair, which either way would go near to be the everlasting Destruction of my Peace—fain would I indulge the pleasing Image of my Passion, and yet preserve my Duty—but, Oh! my Reason tells me, that these two things are incompatible—Help me then with yours—
Let

Let *your* all-powerful Wit find out the means that I may love, and yet be innocent—I have heard much Talk of the Love of Souls—that certainly is the most Heavenly Union; and if it cannot be compleat unless Bodies join, let us, however, be *content* with that, since the other is an Impossibility—at least while we are here: Who knows but in some other World our Circumstances may be equal, and we may enjoy a Blessing which Honour refuses us in this.——Good God! How open do I lay myself, but I have a natural Aversion to all manner of Hypocrisy——besides, there is something in my Soul which forbids me to receive *you*, and tells me, that the very disguising of my Thoughts, which to any other Man would be a *Virtue*, to you would be a *Vice*: I speak to you with my Heart upon my Lips, and I shall never speak otherwise to you; nor need you doubt the Sincerity of my words, when you consult your own Perfections——a thousand Graces play about your Person—a thousand Charms adorn your Conversation——an Infinity of Wit and Gaiety shines through every thing you say and do—I say nothing of your Softness, I am not yet enough acquainted with your Heart——but if I may venture to form a Judgment from what I read in your Eyes, as well as Lines, it cannot be insensible.

—But I ought not to cherish such a Thought, 'tis dangerous to my Honour, and my Quiet; and when I think how many Women have been beguiled by that Belief, the most innocent Correspondence makes me tremble——In a word, the Fears I have both of *you*, and of *myself*, deter me from entering into too intimate an Acquaintance with you——the less Pleasure I take in seeing you, the more my Duty is secure——and is it not better for me to have the Satisfaction to know my Virtue's safe, than to put it to so hazardous a Tryal? —Perhaps I am sufficiently assured of mine, not to need to fear even *you*, with all that undescribable Merit which you have; but then, to avoid a possibility of Danger, is still more sure: and I dare not so far depend upon my Resolution, as to be certain that nothing would escape me I should wish undone.——Let us then forbear any farther Conversation——Let us not meet, unless by accident——and, if I see you not so often as I would, it will be still more often than I ought to wish. I am married——I have no reason to regret the Condition I am in——I love my Husband——yet when you desire me, with all that persuasive Eloquence you are master of, to find some occasion whereby you may commence a Friendship with him, I cannot forbear letting you know, that I
think

think 'tis impossible for him to have a greater Enemy. — Ah! how dangerous is it for a Husband to have Friends of your sort—I know no other Reason that should hinder us from embracing the Honour you would do us—You see how sincere I am; nor am I less so, when I tell you, I shall not go about to *prevent* what I cannot *approve*; but I shall never *seek* the means of creating an Intimacy, which in the end may prove so injurious to both him and me——As for your coming into my Company, I know not what to say, and I have cause to fear I have already said too much—however, I will not suffer you to be obliged to *me* for a Pleasure, which my Reason tells me I ought not to bestow; I mean, I ought not to see you with *Design*, for I can be condemned neither by the World, nor my own Heart, should *Chance* determine for you.——This way only I can converse with you without a Crime; I go often to the *Comedy*, the *Opera*, and other publick Diversions—I do not tell you, the expectation of meeting you, will bring me there more often than I used; but I positively assure you, that my knowledge of your frequenting those Places shall not make me refrain going to them at all—If you ask any greater Marks of my Esteem, I must be obliged to deny you, and I conjure you not to lay me under the necessity

necessity of doing any thing so contrary to my Inclination. ——— Farewel; I have writ a long Epistle, only to let you know you have nothing to hope from me in favour of your Passion; and that if you have a thousand Reasons to prefer *my Love* to *my Friendship*, I have ten thousand to chuse *your Friendship* before your *Love*.



LET-



LETTER II.

THE Letter you writ to me this morning, seems to have more of Gallantry than Sincerity—the Style appears more studied, and the Sentiments are expressed in a manner, which carry a greater share of Art than Nature.—What is your Design?—What will be the Consequence of a Conversation, which, in the very beginning, fills me with a thousand Terrors?—Is it not better for us both to continue as we are? and that you would not intreat with that submissive, yet prevailing Eloquence, what I have now no longer power to refuse you? Yes, I confess, too lovely! too persuasive Man! in spite of the Resolution I had made to see you no more, till some occasion, unknown to me, should present itself, that I neither can withstand the Opportunity you offer of meeting you at eight to-night in the *Tuileries*, nor defend my Heart from indulging a Delight, in the expectation of this Encounter. But, I believe, I shall not venture

ture to come alone, neither would it be proper; I will be walking there a little before the time, and bring a Friend with me, that my meeting you may have more of the appearance of Chance than Design. But what will this Complaisance, which you exact from me, avail you? If you should give the least Hint of the Tenderneſs you have for me, after the Charge I have given you to the contrary, our Converſation muſt not be long; and if you are ſilent in that Affair, as you have promiſed to be in your Letter, what will you ſay to me? You intreat me, in Terms ſo full of Gallantry and Reſpect, the liberty of entertaining me for a quarter of an hour, and make ſo many Aſſeverations, that not one word ſhall eſcape you, which can give offence to the moſt rigid Virtue; that I cannot think myſelf obliged by mine to reſuſe you ſo ſmall a ſatiſfaction; but take care how you make an ill uſe of my, perhaps, too eaſy Grant, nor hope this Interview will produce a ſecond: it would be unjuſt in you to deſire the Conſideration I have for you ſhould make me forget what I owe to my own Honour; and I am not ignorant, that my coming into thoſe meaſures, which you have taken to perſuade me to this meeting, is a Condeſcenſion which renders me unworthy your Eſteem. Believe me, when I look into my Heart,
and

and find a Tendernefs there, which I know not how to excuse. I think on you with regret; nay, I even hate you for inspiring me with Sentiments fo contrary to what I ought to entertain. But, I once more defire to know to what end is this meeting to-night, you have nothing to fay to me which you might not truft in a Letter; or if you had, I affure you the Perfon I bring with me is much lefs to be confided in: it is not however my *Imprudence*, but my *Reason*, which obliges me to make choice of a Woman of this Character for my Companion, in an Adventure which, I am refolved, fhall not terminate to the Difadvantage of my Honour. 'Tis not enough that *nothing of what you fay to me* fhall be known to the World, without I alfo can fay to myfelf, *I have heard nothing*, which, if known, would give me Pain.——

Heavens! how heroick do I fancy myfelf this moment!——and yet I am not fure, in fpite of all my Caution, that I have nothing to fear from this Encounter——

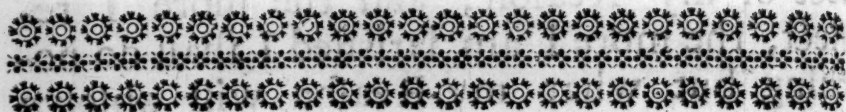
However, I will not difappoint you on the Conditions I have named——but I cannot forbear telling you, that I almoft defpair to find your *Tongue* lefs paffionate than your *Pen*: No words were ever more full of Love, than thofe in which you promifed me to fpeak no more of Love; and in the affuring me, you would conceal your

b

Tender-

Tenderness, you have expressed so much, that I can scarce believe 'tis in your power to restrain your Eyes (if you can your Tongue) from speaking more than I would have any one but myself be witness of. But what do you think I have done with that moving—that transporting Letter I received this morning?—I have burnt it;—yes, I have had Command enough over my Inclinations to commit it to the flames.—But while it consumed, methought my Heart consumed with it, and my *Soul* languished in severer Tortures than my *Body* could, if plunged in that Fire to which I condemned the insensible Paper——I trembled, with an apprehension, that I might have forgot something in it: and yet there was not one engaging Syllable that I had not read over a thousand and a thousand times, before I could resolve to put it out of my power to read it any more.—Interpret, as you please, this little Delicacy—Call it Goodnature—Gratitude—Love—but expect no other Testimonies of it than those I now grant you—I have already told you, and I shall always continue to tell you, that I consent to have the highest Esteem, the most tender Regard, and the sincerest Friendship imaginable for you; but nothing further——I see so vast a Disproportion between your Merit, and that of
any

any other Man, that I can look on the Difference I pay you no otherwise than the Effect of my Reason; and the more I reflect, the more I am satisfied I shall do nothing but what my Reason will absolve me for—But whither am I running?—I have writ a whole Sheet of Paper, only to tell you, I will meet you to-night in the *Tuilleries*——How is it possible I could speak so much on so trifling a Subject? But it is to you I speak, and I cannot give you a better Excuse——I will stay till five, to know how you approve of the Person I bring with me; and if I hear nothing to the contrary from you, I shall take your Silence for Assent. Once more I remind you, that if you hope ever to see me after this night, you must put a Constraint on every Look as well as Word——And to make you easy under a Task, which I believe not a little difficult, be assured I shall put the kindest Construction on your seeming Coldness, and say to my own Heart all you would wish to have it know. —Adieu! My Paper now obliges me, against my Inclination, to give over; and I can only tell you, that I am, if not so much yours as you desire, more yours than I know how to answer to my-self.



LETTER III.

 F I am not mistaken, I yesterday intreated you to write to me no more ; but if I did not, I send this only to conjure you to find no pretence ever to write to me again. I have just now found your Letter, which you conveyed into the Sleeve of my Gown—I have read it, and find it so respectful, so tender, and withal so passionate, that I no longer dare trust myself to reflect upon it.——Ah! what pity to burn so sweet, so ravishing a Testimony of Affection——yet I must do it, tho with a regret which I cannot applaud—What would become of me should I receive any more such Letters? And what Resolution shall I be able to form against a Passion so full of Merit, so full of Charms?—I say a *Passion* ; for 'tis impossible to read what you have writ, without believing you inspired by the most elegant one that ever was.

was. But suppose I could bring my-self to imagine, that Soul-enchanting Softness of your Style was wholly owing to your *Wit*, and *Love* had the least share in dictating your Expressions, what should I be the better? When, from what Source soever they spring, I cannot but be charmed? And, since either way I must be vanquished, why should I be my own Tormentor, by endeavouring to persuade my-self a *Show* of Love has caught me, when I, with equal Reason, and much, Oh! much more Pleasure, may gild my Chain with the sweet hopes of dear *Reality*?——Yet, if you are sincere, what have you to expect but Misery and Despair?——If not, what Injury have I committed against you, that you should feign a fondness to undo me?——How dearly have I paid for the Constraint I laid you under in the *Tuilleries*? And how much more dangerous is it for my Honour and my Peace that I should *read* than *hear* you?——You will tell me, that you kept the Promise you made me, and that not one Syllable of amorous Conversation slipped from your Lips——But what of that, when by that meeting you found means to convey your Sentiments, unperceived by me, in a more sure, more touching manner to my Heart——Nothing ever was so ardent, nothing so tender and so insinuating as what that Letter contained——

For

For Heaven's sake, and for the sake of my eternal Happiness, move me no more in such resistless Terms. If you can take as much pleasure in *loving* me, as I do in the not *hating* you, fix the Satisfaction of us both—Let us remain as we are—let me continue to deserve your Love, and by your not engaging me to any thing that may render me unworthy your Esteem, oblige me not to hate you. Believe me, a distant Conversation, if it is less sweet, will be, not only more pure, but also more durable. I think you seemed to express a desire to know, if I felt not some little Concern for being in a Condition incapable of making you those Returns your Passion might else have hoped; and I never told you that I did not: but I now say more—tho there is all the appearance in the World that I am not unhappy—My Husband has the greatest Tenderness for me—and, I think, I have also for him—but, in spite of all the seeming Blessings I possess, I know nothing less resembles *Love* than *Duty*.—Burn my Letters, I conjure you, as I burn yours, and prevent all possibility of whatever passes between us being known to the World—And, if you must—if you will (in spite of all my Intreaties to the contrary) continue to write to me, you will find a Bit of Paper, inclosed in this, which will direct

rect you how I may receive your Letters with more Security, than if sent to our House: for tho your Servant has taken all imaginable Caution in the Delivery of them, and has hitherto been seen by none, who have had Cunning or Curiosity enough to pry into the Reasons of his coming; yet I have a Chambermaid, who is a little related to my Husband, and if she should ever happen to see him, the Visit would give her sufficient occasion of Suspicion: She wants neither Wit, nor Ill-nature, and if any Opportunity should arrive, by which she might revenge some little Unkindnesses she thinks I have treated her with, she would not fail to take hold of it. The Woman, who used to receive your Letters, has always been very careful in the Delivery of them; but yet I would not put my-self in the power of any one in the world. I shall be infinitely more at ease, if, for the future, you follow my Directions, and making the Superscription to another, deceive even the very Person from whose hands I take them. I wish also, if it were possible (behold my Extravagance!) that you knew not yourself to whom you were writing, and yet I should be distracted if I thought you could write to any other in the manner you do to me—But setting aside these little Foibles in my Nature, which I know not how to term, and much less

less how to excuse, the greatest Proof you can give me (I was going to say of your *Love*, but as I write without Reflection, if an improper word escapes me, have not the worse Opinion of my meaning, which never shall exceed the bounds of Honour, but believe my Pen runs faster than my Thoughts :) The greatest Proof, I say, that you can give me of a true and perfect *Friendship*, is to have the same regard for my Reputation as you would for your own, and never to endeavour to destroy a Virtue, which I, perhaps, too much have put into your power: Love me, I will not say as you would love a *Sister*, there's something in that Name too cold, too flat for my Desires——Nor do I say as you would love a *Wife*, that dull and formal Tye suits me yet worse——But as something which touches upon both, and yet is far transcending both——I will tell you in what manner I wish to be beloved, as part of your-self, as your own Soul; for then you will not oblige me to any thing, which I shall have occasion to repent. I am convinced *you* would be guilty of nothing, which should deserve Reproach; and I wish you would have the same regard for me. I am sensible I speak to you in a manner very different from what most of my Sex would do; but why are you so exactly careful in all your Letters, to avoid men-

mentioning the *Name* of *Love*, when their whole Purport is to persuade me to it, it would be ridiculous in me not to seem to understand you: Yes, I but too well know all you would *say*, and I therefore answer you all I design to *do*. It is not for my Sex to receive the Laws of yours, but rather to impose them; but do not be alarmed, I shall impose nothing which will appear rigorous, when you consult your *Reason*, whatever it may do to your *Passion*: Love me as I ought to be loved, and I consent never to hate you.



Written in a little Piece of Paper inclosed.

*Direct your Letters for Mademoiselle * * *, at Madam * * *, in * * Street, over against the little Door of S * *. I shall constantly receive them before Noon; and if you have not an Answer the same Day, it shall not be my fault: be careful of this Paper, as you would of her who sends it. Remember me, love me, and obey me. Adieu.*





LETTER IV.

I Am not yet fully recovered from the Confusion your Presence, last night at Supper, gave me. Heavens! into what Astonishment was I cast, at seeing you in a Place where I so little expected you? I could not presently believe I was awake, and might much more easily have been persuaded to think I beheld a Vision, than the real Person of my too lovely Friend——How came you to know my Husband made an Entertainment?——And how happened it that you were at the House of the invited Guest?—Have the Goodness to satisfy me in all on your Part, and, in requital, I will inform you that myself have also been an Accomplice, tho an innocent one, in your Temerity. My Husband telling me, that Monsieur *de P*—— excused coming to our House, because that night he was to give a Supper,

Supper, at his own, to a particular Friend, I found myself obliged by, I know not what Impressment (for Heaven knows I was far from imagining you to be the Person) to engage him to renew the Invitation ; and assure *Monsieur*, that the Company of that Friend would add to the Pleasure of the Entertainment.—He assented to this Proposal—what followed, you are not ignorant of ; he came, and brought with him a Person, who, tho never absent from my mind, in that Company I was entirely unprepared to receive——How ought I to chide you, for not acquainting me with your Design ! for I am certain it was not *Chance* which brought you hither. A *Billet* of three Lines might have prevented my Surprize, and put me on my guard against those first Emotions, which were like enough to have made Discoveries fatal to my Honour and my Peace——I know you will tell me, that you forbore letting me into the Secret of your Contrivance, out of a fear that I should have opposed it : Perhaps indeed my Reason might have advised me to do so ; but I much doubt my Heart would not have permitted me to obey such Dictates——Oh that you would deal with me, in all things, with the same Plainness and Sincerity that I do with you ; but your concealing *this*, alarms me with an Apprehension, that you may

conceal *others* also; and the Disquiets which you gave me yesterday, are succeeded by others to-day, which torment me not less—How am I assured you have not made Monsieur *de P*—— a Confidant in an Affair, which I had much rather you would forget yourself——’Tis possible, that this very Testimony I now give you of my Weakness, may be the Theme of your Discourse when next you see him—— Good God! if you should be guilty of so great an Indiscretion, how miserable must I be? My Honour, my Reputation are at stake, and I know not if I should not be more wretched, in the Thoughts they suffered by your Mismanagement, than even the Loss of them, valuable as they are, could make me. In a Correspondence such as ours, to take away the *Mystery*, is to take away the *Merit*; and, I hope, I have done nothing since the beginning of our Friendship, which could give you any just Occasion to desire a Breach of it.—Tell me then—I conjure you, by all your Protestations of eternal Secrecy and Truth, if you have never trusted the dear—the dangerous Secret of your Tenderness for me to other Ears but mine—I ask no other Security than your word; you have no cause to question my Willingness to believe you, and I am sure you are too-generous to take advantage of my easy Faith,

Faith, or abuse the Confidence of a Woman, who assists you to deceive herself: Satisfy me in this, and I pardon you the Confusion you gave me; nay, will confess that I find no reason you should be at the pains of an Excuse——I begin to think the Pleasure you took in surprizing me, was an Effect of your Love; and to speak ingenuously, I *accuse* you not, but for the pleasure of *justifying* you——Good Heaven! how do you take up all my Soul!——notwithstanding I had so much Company last night, I saw none but you, spoke to none but you, and could think of nothing but you——I placed myself over against you, to bless my Sight with that delightful Prospect; but whenever my Eyes met yours, a guilty Joy, mixed with a Shame and Terror, at once invaded me, and I, at last, dare look no more; for fear, conscious of what passed within, my Blushes, or my Tremblings, should betray me? Judge what I felt in so violent a Constraint——in vain I flattered myself, that when Supper was done, and I had liberty to change my Place, I should get over my Disorder——Alas! it was easy for me to remove my *Body*, but impossible to banish the Anxiety of my *Mind*; the more time I had to reflect, the more I was tormented and confounded; to my other Inquietudes, I had that of *Jealousy* added. When I found
my-

myself separated from you, was at another Table, and obliged to play with other Company, I thought nothing could have given me a more sensible Chagrin; but when I turned my Head, and hoped to steal a Look from you, unperceived by those who were near me, and saw you busily engaged at Ombre with Ladies, whom, I confess, I cannot like you should converse with, because they indeed are too amiable—Oh! what a Torrent of unruly Passion overwhelmed my Soul! I play'd I know not how, lost my Money, quarrelled with my Companions, curs'd my Ill-fortune; and the Cards running against me, as well they might, served me for a Pretence to conceal the real Cause of my Uneasiness. My Husband, always obliging, perceiving I was weary of play, took my place: But, good God! how little did that contribute to my Tranquillity, I then had opportunity to observe you more—I saw you, with too much Tendernefs in your Eyes, regard the Ladies you were with—I heard you talk to them—heard you laugh—discovered so much ungrateful Gaiety in your Countenance, that my Heart no longer could forbear believing you inconstant, deceitful, and perfidious. Can it be possible, said I to myself, that after all the pains he has taken to convince me he had a true and perfect Passion for me, he should behave

behave himself in this manner! Can he wear all that Softness in his Eyes, and I not there?—Can his words flow with that harmonious Sweetness, when addressed to other Women?—Can he be thus composed, thus pleased, thus gay, when he, too well, must know the Agitations, the inexpressible Inquietudes which torture me?—How despicable did this Consideration make me appear to my-self?—How did I then condemn my easy Faith? how exclaim against your Falshood?—In fine, I suffered for some moments all that Distraction could inflict—The Violence of my Pain too well convinced me of the Greatness of *my Passion*; but, Oh my charming Conqueror!—was it a Proof of *yours* to give it me?—Could any one that loved, thus torture what he loved?—You omitted nothing indeed, the whole night, which belonged to the Man of Breeding; all your Behaviour expressed the *fine Gentleman*, but so artfully concealed *the Lover*, that 'tis no wonder an impatient jealous Soul, like mine, should doubt if you *are* so. My Husband is entirely charmed with your Conversation, and thinks himself under a perpetual Obligation to *Monfieur de P—*, for bringing him acquainted with you—(Alas! how easy are the Innocent deceived, and what an Alteration would it make in his Sentiments, should he ever discover the
 Correspon-

Correspondence we have had !) Manage with Discretion the beginning of this Friendship, and, if you continue to desire it, we may have many Opportunities of Conversation without Suspicion. I remember you spoke of an Entertainment you designed to make next Thursday; and, in the midst of my Disquiets, I flatter my-self with a Belief, it is only for my sake: but nothing can more assure me it is so, than your complying with my Request to change that day for St. *John's*, because you bear that Name; and where there is a real Tenderness, every little Trifle gives a Pleasure, else why should those Letters, which compose the name of *John*, be so much more preferable than the rest of the Alphabet to my Ears !—Judge favourably of my Extravagance, for what is it Love is not capable of inspiring. *Adieu.*



LET-



LETTER V.

AS you have obliged me in the Assurance that our Conversation, innocent as it is, is only known to ourselves; I think I can do no less in return, than give you my Promise of being easy for the future: Nay, so entirely do I depend on what you say, that even in this Point, which sticks so closely to my Soul, my Reputation, I did not hesitate one moment whether I should believe you. I have the same Impatience which you have, and perhaps much more——Perhaps, did I say? much more, without doubt, for the Approach of dear To-morrow, which will bring us to each other's Presence: But, good God! with how many Disquiets must I purchase the pleasure of seeing you?——yet pardon me, when I say it is a kind of Consolation to me, that you, in some measure, will be Partaker of my Chagrin——

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My Husband will be with us!—Oh disagreeable!—no room to speak one soft, one tender word——no Opportunity even for one kind Glance——What a Constraint must both of us endure?——But this is not all; my Reason, ingenious in tormenting me, has found another Obstacle——You cannot handsomely dispense with not inviting your Friend Monsieur *de P*——to your Entertainment; and certainly, next to you, he has the most Wit and Penetration of any Man I know. I dread his Discernment, and fear his Curiosity more even than my Husband's: if any part of that Tenderness you profess for me be real, let a Guard on all your Actions before him;——but I less suspect your Artifice than my own——Oh that I better could disguise my Thoughts——Is it because *our Sex* is the weaker, or because *yours* is less sensible, that the Wishes of our Souls are more easily discovered? I fear the latter is the true Cause, and that the Reason why it is no difficult Task for you to *conceal* a Passion, is, that when you please, you know how to *vanquish* it. Would to God I could be so much the Mistress of my Inclinations,——how happy should I be to love you less! For tho, I confess, there is not a *Man* on Earth so worthy to be loved as you, yet I am certain that there is not a *Woman* on Earth who ought to love you

you less—How unhappy my Condition is, I leave to your own Heart to judge; and if I am as dear to you, as you would persuade me to believe, you would wish there were a possibility for me to regain my Peace, tho at the expence of that Friendship you have taken so much pains to fix—What shall I say? 'tis dangerous to see, to hear, to read you, yet in that Employment lies my only Happiness—I take no pleasure but in reflecting on you, and yet the more I think, the more I am undone:—In spite of all the Fears, the Terrors which invade me in your Presence, I burn with Impatience to be with you again—I languish when I see you, but when I see you *not*, I die.—This is the true State of my Heart, and I endure far more than 'tis possible for me to express; but when I consider 'tis for *you* that I endure it, methinks there's something glorious in my Sufferings, and I prefer an Agitation, so meritorious, to a Tranquillity stupid and insipid——To know, and not to admire you, were an Affront to my Understanding,—not to acknowledge it, would injure my Sincerity—not to return your Friendship, would render me unworthy of it: and sure when *Friendship* such as ours, elevated to that high degree on both sides, known, confessed, believed, returned, it wants not much of *Love*. Burn my Letters, I in-

treat you, but I wish not you should forget their meaning; for notwithstanding all the Efforts I have made to drive you from taking too great a possession of my Soul, you are, you will be all I think on—— Dream on——wish for, and I would not have you less unhappy than myself in this Particular—but, tell me, (my triumphant Charmer!)——would you not think me vain, and too much influenced by the Follies of my Sex, if I should imagine there was so great a Sympathy between us, as to make you a Sharer in all those Pains I feel when separated from you? May I believe *your* Heart capable of those Emotions, which agitate *mine* with so much Vehemence? If I may, there is now an Opportunity, the most favourable in the World, for both our Wishes. My Husband knows not at what Hour he is to attend you to-morrow; you may make that an Excuse to visit him this Evening, he will rejoice in the favour you do him, and without doubt will intreat you to sup with us, and I flatter myself you will, for my sake, so far oblige him. I shall be much more happy in your Company this night, than I was the last; not only because I am prepared for your Reception, but also that Monsieur *de P*—— will not be with us. Behold the Perfidy I am guilty of to a Husband, the most deserving in the World, to make him serviceable

viceable in procuring me a pleasure so injurious to himself; my Reason, my Prudence, my Honour, my Duty are *against*, but are not forcible enough to *prevent* the liberty I take in favour of my Passion—Do *you* then contradict me—'tis in *your* power alone to stop the boundless Progress of my headstrong Wishes, as much as I detest to be controlled; if you do not, perhaps, I shall detest you more—'Tis a ridiculous Objection to say, my Husband will be a Witness of all we do, my Virtue without him were a sufficient Security; my Peace of Mind is lost—my Reputation is endangered, and my Faith violated by your too powerful Merit and my own Sensibility—I am ruined if I go on in this wild Course of Passion; (yet cruel, lovely Friend!) you'll not restrain me—How much ought I to hate myself, for entering into a Conversation which, I might well believe, I should not have the power to break off—I loved from the first moment I beheld you—and should I not have shunned you?—I was charmed with the Graces of your Person, and yet I still looked on—I was transported with your Wit, and yet I listened to it—I was ravished with the enchanting Style of your Letters, and yet I encouraged you to write—I opened every Sense to take in your Perfections, till all my Soul was full of them, and
I

I have now no room for any other Thought ; but to what end is this recital, you know much more than I can say ! My *Actions* are greater, and more perfect Testimonies of what you have inspired me with, than *Words* can be—The meeting you in the *Tuilleries*, at your desire—my Permission to write to me—the Pleasure with which I receive your Letters—the Regret with which I burn them—the Disquiets I suffered in seeing you with other Women—the Trouble with which I part with you—the Impatience I have to see you again—in fine, every thing I do, lets you into the Secret of my Heart—You *know* I love—but Oh ! not all I do, nor all I say, can ever make you sensible how *much*—not even your own Imagination, extensive as it is, can comprehend how dear, how very dear you are to my admiring Soul !—But, in the name of God, content yourself with this, nor suffer that Weakness, which we equally are guilty of, to triumph over our Reason ! —Still let Virtue bear the Sway, and if we cannot vanquish Inclination, let it not vanquish us. Adieu ! I hear my Husband's Voice, and the bare Apprehension of being surprized in an Employment I so ill could answer, makes me tremble.

POST.

P O S T S C R I P T.

IT is now just three a-clock; if you are so far engaged, that I cannot hope to see you this Evening, let me know it by five at farthest, else at six I shall expect you: Come rather half an hour before the time, than stay a moment after it. I give you leave to make the kindest Interpretation of my Impatience.

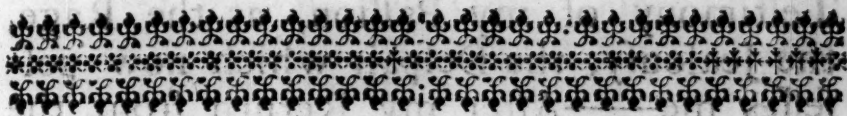
A BILLET sent two hours after the foregoing Letter.

I Had no sooner received your obliging Billet, which brought me the welcome Assurance of seeing you to-night; but my Husband came into my Chamber to acquaint me, that Monsieur *de Crequy* had engaged him to accompany him to the *Hotel de Ville*, and that Madam L——, and other Ladies, would take no Denial from me—How on a sudden were all my pleasing Expectations crossed?—My imaginary Felicity turned to a State of real Wretchedness—I protest (my charming, my too dear Friend) this Message sounded like a Clap of Thunder to my Ears, but there's no avoiding the cruel Summons—I must attend

attend this insipid Company, and leave all the Happiness that Light or Life can give—Depend upon it, my Soul will be with you; and tho' this curs'd Formality confines my Body, all my Thoughts are yours; and I should be inconsolable, under this Misfortune, if it were not for the hopes to-morrow's Joys would make a full amends for the Disappointment of to-night—Come in the morning, perhaps, my Husband, so much charmed as he is with you, may be Gallant enough to press you to go in our Coach to the Place where you make your Entertainment; if so, I doubt not but you will accept it, for the pleasure you will give me in it.——Farewel. I have time to say no more—dream of me—think of me as I do of you——but that's impossible.



LET



LETTER VI.

Written at Midnight.

FATIGUED with the Magnificence of the Day, and overcome with the Richness and Variety of your Wines, my Husband is in so sound a Sleep, that, I believe, the loudest Trumpets in his Ear would not have the power to awake him——In what a blessed State of Franquillity is he! neither Love, nor Jealousy, disturb his Rest——And how fortunate is it for me (since I have so much cause for my Ch grin) that his unusual Lethargy has given me an Opportunity of lying in another Chamber, where, unperceived, I may give a loose to all the Inquietudes which perplex me——Yes, lovely Tyrant! yes, notwithstanding the many Proofs I have already given you of my Love, and the little Reason I now have to

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continue

continue in that mind, I cannot restrain myself from giving you yet more——nor do I know if all I have done be so great a Testimony of my Passion, as the Rage, the Jealousy, the Despair which now possesses me——After my Return from the Visit I was yesterday obliged to make, I spent the best part of the night in my ordinary Agitations (Ingrateful! you are too well assured who 'twas that caused them) but at last a drowzy Heaviness (it could not be called Rest) overpowered my Senses; but while I slept, the Eye of Fancy waked, and a thousand indistinct Ideas skim'd along before me—those I remember not, till, at the approach of Day, a Time they say when vain Illusions fly, I had a Dream of too much sad Presage to be forgot——I have never been guilty, like most of my Sex, of giving Faith to those visionary Oracles; and if I now do, you ought not to despise me for it, since where they bear so perfect a resemblance of Truth as mine did, it would rather be an imprudent *Obstinacy* to reject, than an idle *Superstition* to regard them. Methought I was in *Luxemburgh-Garden*, where I beheld the finest little Spaniel I ever saw, the Ears of it hung down to the Ground, and it was marked, with so exact a Symmetry, with small black Spots, that it seemed more the Workmanship of *Art* than *Nature*.
Pleased

Pleased with the uncommon Beauty of the Creature, I took it up, began to stroke it, and play with it, and endeavoured, by all the ways I could, to make it fond of me; but it seemed uneasy at finding itself confined, and would fain have escaped from me. I offered it Bisquit and Sweetmeats, it refused them; and when I opened its Mouth, and would have forced it to swallow something, it flew out of my Arms with all the Violence imaginable; and being got a good distance off, made a strange sort of a Noise, I know not how to describe, between a Howl and a Bark; and when that ceased, with Accents resembling human, *Your Kindness is dangerous,* it cry'd, *and may drive us both to Disraction.* Then running swiftly to a Woman, who sat at the further end of the Walk, and which, as near as I can remember, had the appearance of Mademoiselle de—, it jumped into her Lap, and both together vanished. The Terror I was in, immediately waked me; I rejoiced to find it but a Dream: but tho I was then far from being able to make any just Interpretation of its meaning, I could not help thinking it bore some ill Presage; and it was the Melancholy, that Reflection occasioned, which you observed in my Countenance, and took notice of to me when you led me to my Coach. However, I

could not long retain it in your Company : Bless'd in your Sight, I lost all thoughts but Love ; and if I could not be so happy in your Conversation as I *wished*, by reason of my Husband and your Friend Monsieur *de P*——, yet I was as happy as I could *expect*, the whole time of our little Journey to *Vincennes*——Oh ! that it had been longer ! too soon, alas ! the short-liv'd Pleasure ceased——When we arrived, and the next Coach to ours brought Mademoiselle *de* ——, and her Daughter, good Heaven ! with how much Transport did you gaze upon her ?——Your Eyes were rivetted, and moved but as she turned——whene'er you spoke to her, it was with so much Alteration in your Voice, as manifested but too plainly the pleasure you took in entertaining her ; and what chagrin'd me more, I saw she observed the unusual Ceremony you treated her with, and triumphed in the Deference you paid her——Confusion ! how the thought on't stings me——How pleased, how vain the Creature looked !——how impertinently did she talk ! yet, Villain ! you applauded all she said——you did——and, by all the manner of your Behaviour to her, sufficiently made it plain to the whole Company, you had no Consideration but of her——I saw it, 'twas too, too visible to all, but much more so to jealous Love——I saw that

that Heart, which to secure I had forfeited my Duty, my Reputation, and my eternal Quiet, devoted to another—I found the Entertainment, which, I flattered myself, was designed only for my sake, was made in honour of a Rival——Oh Torture!——Curse on the Occasion which brought me into your Presence!——Curse on the Day in which I first beheld you——but doubly curs'd be that detested Hour in which I listen'd to your perjured Vows——Compare now (if you can lose so much time from your new Passion) the Incidents of my Dream with those of Reality, and be just enough to confess yourself ungrateful and unconstant——I do not deny but my Rival has Charms; she is handsome, young, gay, and—perhaps—in every thing surpasses me; I plead no Merit but my Love: But whatever my other Deficiencies may be, you have *sworn* yourself my everlasting Votary, and I have had the Weakness to *believe* you——Wretch that I am!——I have *indeed* confided in you to my Ruin, and yet, now I find myself betrayed and wronged (shameful Confession!) I have not Resolution to despise you——No, cruel, inhuman as you are, I cannot hate you——cannot love you less than I have done——That Tendernefs, which my Opinion of your Desert created, is wound about my Heart, so closely twisted with

with the Strings of Life, that, till they break, I ne'er can shake it off—Ah! how *severely* just is Heaven, to punish, with such sad Despair, the first, the only Weakness of this kind I ever have been guilty of! Had any *other* been inflicted on me, I could have borne it patiently, and, sheltered beneath the Wings of *Love*, defy'd the worst of Fate; nay, bless'd my State, if ne'er so wretched, if secure of *you*—Have I preserved my Virtue, endured the Strugglings of tempestuous Passion, resisted Nature, and your endearing Pleadings, done more than ever Woman did to make me worthy your Esteem, and must I lose it thus?—Is it possible a Woman you have seen but twice (for I think that unfortunate day my Husband made his Entertainment was the first) should gain so entire a possession of your Soul, that for *her* sake you chuse to sacrifice a Passion such as *mine*? Is her Beauty, or her Wit, suppose them both superior to mine, a sufficient Counterballance for the Merit of my Love? She is ignorant of half your Excellencies, nor has Solidity enough to weigh them as she ought; she does not—cannot love like me—What have I said?—how vain is such a Thought?—*Not love like me!*—Why should she not? Has she not Eyes?—not Ears?—Have you not Perfections easily distinguished?—Yes, you both are equally enamour'd! *You*
are

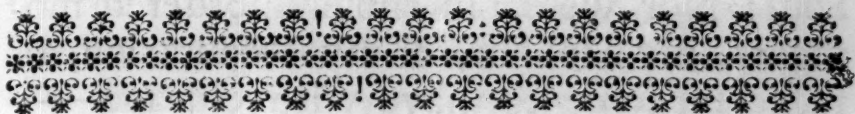
are divinely charming!—*she* susceptible!—*You* have made known your Love!—*she* listens—*Your* Quality may *claim*!—*her* Fortune may *deserve*!—All things conspire against me—my Ruin is determined! my Dream is true. Oh! that I could cease to think—to live—to be. —Distraction!—Death!—Hell yields not half my Tortures! ——— I conjure you, not by your Love to me (for that you, by your yesterday's Behaviour, have renounced, and with it Heaven, which you so oft have called a witness to your faithless Imprecations) but by the Tyes of common Gratitude, of Humanity, and Good-nature, to write to me once more——Let me at least know *why* I am forsaken——let me but know in *what* my Rival merits more than I, and I'll forgive your Perjuries, and trouble you no more with my Reproaches——Oh God!——I need not promise that——whene'er the cruel Certainty arrives, that I, *indeed*, have lost you, those few short Syllables conclude, at once my Life, my Love, and my Despair, and your own Conscience will be your only Monitor——See! not content to pass the *Night* in mortal Agitations, the *Day* has found me in them——if I do not hear from you before I am obliged to receive Company, it will be in vain for me to endeavour to conceal my Disorders; they are too violent——too terrible

rible to be dissembled——nor will those, occasioned by such Injuries as mine, admit of Artifice——Farewel, thou most wavering, falsest, but still most dear of all thy treacherous Sex: my Tears prevent my saying any more, than that I must love you always.

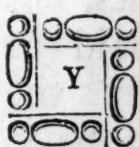
P O S T S C R I P T.

AN S W E R me immediately, I beg you, by all that in this World is dear to you: I have contrived that you shall receive it about the hour, I have heard you say, you generally rise; I would not disturb you sooner, tho I have little reason to consult the Repose of a Man, who takes a pleasure in destroying mine; and who, after having made me pass the Night in so cruel a Distraction, is himself, perhaps, employed in pleasing Dreams of his new Conquest: The greatest favour you can do me, next to your speedy Reply, is to burn this; and whatever Occasion I have given *you* to ridicule my Weakness, be not ungenerous enough to expose me to the malicious Insults of a triumphant happy *Rival*——Once more adieu——pity at least the Condition you have reduced me to; but let not *Good-Nature* so far prevail above *Sincerity*, as to oblige you to feign a Tenderness you no longer are capable of feeling.

L E T-



LETTER VII.


 OU have reason, my everlasting
 Charmer!—my Soul's Adored!
 my most transporting!—(I know
 not by what name to call you, for you are
 far more dear to me than all this World
 calls precious) you have reason to be sur-
 prized at the Distraction of my last night's
 Letter! But what is it a Woman, posses-
 sed at once with Love and Jealousy, is not
 capable of doing? Notwithstanding the
 haste you made to rid me of my Inqui-
 etudes, I thought it too long, I was impa-
 tient for your Answer, even before there
 was a possibility of your receiving mine,
 and look'd on your Delay as a new Proof
 of your Indifference: The extreme Vio-
 lence of the two most furious Passions Hu-
 man Nature is capable of feeling, had al-
 most tempted me to seek you—Yes, I was
 f coming,

coming, in Person, to upbraid you—to rage—revile—to say I know not what—and give a Loose to all the Tempest of my Soul: Nor were, in those disordered moments, my Honour, or my Reputation, of sufficient force to have withheld me—nothing, but the Consideration how much so indiscreet an Action would have rendered me unworthy your Esteem, could have restrained me, till your dear Letter blessed my longing Eyes, and with its kind, its ravishing Contents, reversed my Sentiments, and restored me to my Hopes. Is it then possible the Devoirs you paid to *Mademoiselle de* ——— were only the Effects of Gallantry? And will you be so divinely good, to keep the Promise you have made me, of seeing her no more?—Am I worthy of so remarkable a Testimony of your Constancy? Great God! how glorious is my present State?—And how richly am I paid for the Sacrifice I have made you of my Peace!—To suffer *by* you, would be Hell; but to suffer *for* you, is Heaven: and while you continue to love me, I never can repent my Condescensions——How unjust, therefore, is it in you to accuse me of Insensibility? What mean you by telling me that I am ignorant of the Violence of your Passion? It cannot burn with so much fierceness in your Heart, but that what I feel in mine would

would make me capable of conceiving it—
 I have already said, and now again confirm it, that never Woman lov'd to that degree I do; and there is nothing, which Virtue will permit, I would deny, to prove the Sincerity of my words—Alas! did I say I *would*?—I mean, I *have* deny'd you nothing, but that which you never must expect, and which—perhaps—I think myself as wretched in *refusing*, as you can in being *refused*—To suspect my Tenderneſs is the only way to diminish it, and when you preſs me for further Marks of it, it puts me on Reflection how many you have received; and inſtead of obliging me to do more, makes me look back, with ſhame, on what I have already done: Think gratefully on the *paſt*, and you will not be unreaſonable enough to ask more for the *future*, than the Continuance of the *preſent*—Is it not ſufficient that you have not only made a Conqueſt over my Heart, my Soul, and all the Faculties of it; but brought me to *confess* how much you are my Conqueror—What would you more?—There's nothing but *unguarded* Virtue ſtands againſt you, and—will you not take advantage of my Weakneſs, if I ſhould tell you, 'tis only the moſt refin'd Sublimity of Paſſion, which enables me to hold even the laſt proof 'tis in my power to give how much I am yours?—Were

f 2

you

you less dear to me, I less should fear to
 lose you——Let me then——let me, I
 conjure you, still preserve my Honour, for
that once violated, I were, indeed, desert-
 less; and, Oh! you cannot *love* me long,
 when I no more am worthy your *Esteem*.
 Now, if you forsake me, I shall, at least,
 have this Consolation, that your *Levity*,
 not my *Ill-Conduct*, has undone me——I
 will then, if 'tis possible for me to do so,
 still retain the only Quality which makes
 me appear truly amiable——You never
 shall have *Reason* to despise me! and if you
 are not content with the Disquiets I *have*
 —I *do*, and, while I have Life, *must* suffer
 for your sake; load me yet with more:
 expose me, if you please, suffer my Let-
 ters, which I suspect, in spite of my re-
 peated Intreaties, you have not burned, to
 come in publick Testimonies against me——
 And what's more terrible than all, before
 my Face, protest to another all you have
 sworn to me——Do all you can——even
 more than I can fear——a secret Joy would
 make my Woes sit easy, when I reflect how
 little I merited such Treatment; and,
 that if I could not help loving the most
 excellent, the most transporting of Man-
 kind, I yet had strength enough of Virtue,
 unaided as it is, to resist my own Wishes,
 and his Pressures——Forbear, dear thank-
 less Charmer! to upbraid me with what
 you

you have done for me: What have you done? besides resolving to see a Woman no more, for whom you say you have no regard.——But put the Case you have, 'tis but a new-born Inclination, at the most, you sacrifice: How much more, good Heaven! how infinitely much more are you obliged to me! who have broke through all the Ties the World calls Sacred——Am I not *ungrateful* to hate a Husband, who loves me more than Life?——Am I not *impious*, in taking away a Heart, which both by Divine and Human Laws ought only to be his——Am I not *base*, in making him a Property, to further the criminal Conversation I enjoy with you——Do I not suffer all the Racks of Thought which Guilt and Shame can give——And are these trifling Favours?——Lovely Encroacher! Can you expect yet more?——Yes, I have found the Truth! I will no more suspect your Vows; I do, indeed, believe you, when you say you love me; and know too well the boundless Wishes of that Passion, and the Pangs, the burning Pangs it suffers when restrained; 'tis to procure your Ease, to restore your Heart to that Repose, Desire has robbed it of, you seek to ruin me. Distaste is always the Consequence of Vice; and when you have made me wicked, you will find it no difficulty to scorn me——Ah! how many

ny Tears does this Consideration cost me—yet it is my only Defence—Fool that I am to tell you so, but 'tis impossible to conceal any thing from you——In pity, therefore, cease to tempt me——either resolve to love me with Innocence, or I must resolve to see you no more——Oh God! how many Hells are in that word?—See you no more!——It must not—cannot be while Life remains——Yes, I must see you this very Evening at the Place you appoint; but I *charge* you by the power, you say, I have over you—I *conjure* you by that I have given you over me, to make no ill use of an Opportunity so favourable to your Desires. Permit me to retain the charming Hope, that I *always* shall be happy in *your* Love, and, by not abusing the Confidence I put in you, prove yourself truly worthy of *mine*.

P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE I writ this (for I had not an Opportunity of sending it immediately) I have had an Account of Mademoiselle *de L——*. You know, and so does the whole Town, she made a Sacrifice of her Honour to her Passion, in favour of Monsieur *de M——*, and the Ingratitude of his Treatment since: The Misery of her Condition now, is a sufficient warning to her
Sex;

Sex ; and tho about three hours hence you may expect to see me, be assured I come arm'd with a Resolution becoming my Virtue and my Love.



A B I L L E T, written on her Return from the Appointment.

N O, Monsieur, no ; the Outrage you have done me is not of a nature to be pardoned. How wretched had I been this moment, if Fortune had not been as favourable to me, as your Inclinations were the contrary ? And how much ought I to bless Mademoiselle *de S*—— for her seasonable Interruption ?——Is it thus that you return a Passion so true, so tender, and so ardent as was mine ? And is it by such means you think to preserve the Regard of a Woman of Honour ?——But, I see my Error, in believing there was a possibility for one of your Sex to have Generosity enough to entertain any further View than the Gratification of your own Desires——Poor despicable Notion !——Base Degeneracy of Nature ! How I disdain the Heart that harbours it !——I freely now release you of the Promise you made me, and which you had the Vanity to imagine
merited

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merited

merited the highest Reward ——— Visit
 Mademoiselle de —, or who you please;
 I shall not envy, but pity the unhappy
 Consequences of your Addresses. I desire
 no other favour of you, than if, as 'tis not
 impossible, you boast of the Tenderneſs
 you have been able to inspire me with,
 you will alſo do me the juſtice to acknow-
 ledge, I retain'd it no longer than you
 continu'd worthy of it.



*A BILLET, in answer to a Letter
 of Excuse ſhe had received from
 him.*

DO you then, unworthy and ingrateful
 as you are, pretend to juſtify a Deſign
 ſo injurious to my Honour? Can you ima-
 gine I have the Weakneſs to believe my
 rendring myſelf deſertleſs of your *Reſpect*,
 ſhould more endear me to your *Love*? Oh!
 no; I am not ſo little acquainted with the
 World, or the Temper of Mankind: And
 when you reproach me with want of Sin-
 cerity, in refuſing to you, whom I pretend
 to *love*, thoſe Favours, which Duty obliges
 me to yield to a Husband whom I *hate*; I
 muſt tell you, that I hate him not the
 thouſandth, thouſandth part ſo much as I
 love

love you ; and that I suffer his Caresses, disagreeable as he is now become, with less regret than I should yours, all dear, all charming as you are ; curs'd Apprehension would damp the Transport, reverse the Bliss, and make the Heaven of your Embrace a Hell——But all these Arguments are now too late, I find it an Impossibility to continue an innocent Correspondence with you, and must resolve entirely to break off——I send back your Letter, because I will not give myself the trouble of burning it, and the greatest Obligation you can now lay on me, is to write to me no more.



*Another BILLET, in answer to a
second Letter, on the same Ac-
count.*

AH! good God! what fruitless Troubles do you give yourself! I thought the Billet I sent you this morning had sufficiently explained my Intentions, to prevent your making any further Efforts to disturb the Tranquillity of a Repose I am now endeavouring to regain. What Pleasure, lovely cruel Man, do you take in persecuting me? Your Letters never gave

g

me

me greater Joy, than now they do Disquiet: nothing can be more tender, nothing more passionate than the last you writ; yet nothing ever carried so little power of Persuasion. I have considered of all the Reasons you alledge for your Excuse, and have added ten thousand more from my own Heart; yet can find none sufficient for your Justification: what more can I do for you?——To pardon you, and at the same time confess I think you unworthy of it, were to encourage you to offend again; and to feign an Insensibility of the Greatness of your Crime, were an Affront to my Understanding——I must then desist all manner of Conversation with you——’Tis not long since that Reflection would have been the most dreadful one I could have entertained; but in the Condition I now am, nothing can alarm me——I return this Letter, as I did the other, and, with my usual Sincerity, assure you, that tho, I fear, I never shall be able to bring myself to love you less, yet I shall omit nothing in my power for that purpose——Adieu——for——ever.





LETTER VIII.

WELL, dear Ingrateful! well, I pardon you the Injury you have done me, and promise never to reproach you for a fault, which only the Violence of your Passion made you guilty of: I can no longer resist the moving Eloquence of your Despair, and though you justly merited the Pangs you suffered, I could not see you in them, without becoming too much a Partaker not to release us both—and yet, I fear, I shall repent this sudden Change—What carry'd me yesterday to that Woman's House where you found me?—What prevented my leaving it as soon as you appeared?—Why did I give myself liberty to gaze upon those Eyes, and listen to That Tongue, which ne'er can plead in vain?—How did my Anger melt away at your Approach?—How did my Soul dissolve in Love and Tenderneſs?—

And when you first approached me, and trembling, with silent Awe, pressed to your Lips my too, too-yielding Hand, you might have read your Pardon in my Blushes — My Spirits were so much confused and hurried, betwixt a mixture of Extasy and Pain, the few moments I was with you, that 'tis no wonder, at my Return home, I should be incapable of recollecting any thing I had said to you; but by what you have writ this morning, I find my words did not absolutely contradict my Heart. Whether it was the remainder of those soft Emotions, the unexpected sight of you inspired me with, has been the Cause, or that there is something in this last Letter of yours, more tender, more persuading than the rest, I know not; but, in spite of the Tears it cost me in perusing, I find it impossible for me either to return, or burn it, as I have done the others. I keep it in my Bosom — press it to my Heart, which, while it bounds with tender Transports to meet the welcome Treasure, upbraids, in bursting Sighs, the niggard Bounty of injurious Fate, which, for *substantial*, gives but *imaginary* Joys. — Ah! why should Love like ours be term'd a Crime? — Why should Desires, agreeable as well to Reason as to Nature, be withstood? — Cruel Heaven! but why accuse I Heaven? — 'Tis the Decrees of *Man*,
not

not *Heaven*, are against us:—*Man* ! undistinguishing, unthinking *Man* ! who forming Laws to bind the inconstant Vulgar, could find no means to leave the nobler Part unchained, and made Marriage a Sacrament alike to all.——Good God ! how much should I be censured by some People for expressing my Sentiments in this unguarded manner ! But I speak to one that loves me——to one who, if the Graces of his Person first made me admire him, the Conformity of his Notions since has made me doat on—to one who, I hope, will take no advantage of my Freedom, and one who has already suffered too much for his Temerity to be in danger of a Relapse—No, by my eternal Hopes, I swear, could you be capable of offending me a second time, in the manner you have done, tho I live but in the charming Contemplation of being beloved by you, tho my Soul hangs on you with a Tenderneſs almoſt unconceivable, there is no Death ſo dreadful, which I would not prefer to the ſhame of a Reconciliation with you. For pity then ſave me from the cruel neceſſity of Dying, either with Remorſe for my *own* Guilt, or Grief for *yours* ; for with the ſame Sincerity I have always uſed, I now aſſure you, that Life, in a State of Separation from you, would be a Burden I could not long ſuſtain —— I loved you, even when I
thought

thought I had the least Reason to do so; and how severe soever my Expressions might appear in those three *Billets* I sent you, my Heart still took your part, and felt Pains more sensible than any thing I writ could cause in yours.——I remember, in the Fury of my Resentment, I gave you permission to visit Madamoiselle de——, or any other Woman you should think worthy your Addresses. I believe I need not tell you that I resume that Grant, and what would *then* have been an inconsolable Affliction, *now* would be an unpardonable Offence. You know, besides my natural Propensity to Jealousy, I have Ambition enough to wish to engross all your moments; and those you cannot share with me, I would have you spend in contemplating me: nor do I, in demanding this, require more than an equal Return for what I give to you. But to convince you how sincerely I forgive the Error of your past Behaviour, and how much I confide in your Promise for regulating your future Conduct, I shall put it in your power to prove yourself the Man of Honour you would seem, and which, should you fail in, I am every way the most unfortunate of Women. My Husband will be all this Afternoon engaged abroad, and I have promised to pass those hours of his Absence with a Sister of his; but I know how to
make

make a better use of so happy an Opportunity, and when you have examined your own Heart, if you find yourself sufficiently Master of your Desires, to contain within the Bounds of Modesty and Virtue, I shall meet you, at the good Woman's where you found me yesterday, with all the Eagerness of transported Love. I hope to be there by four a-clock at farthest ; but if you are obliged to wait a little for me, it will not be my Inclination that detains me. I have sent a Note, to order her to prepare a Collation of what Fruits are in season for our Entertainment, and that little Repast with you will be more pleasing, than the most magnificent Feast, debarred your Presence, or obliged to endure the Company of disagreeable Observators——But let us, I pray you, forget the little Divorce we have had, and the Occasion of it ; you are sufficiently justified to my Soul, and as I will not *reproach*, so do not you *excuse*. I would have nothing to poison the Felicity of those blessed moments, and sure there cannot be a greater known, than when two Persons, who want not Wit, and are equally loving and beloved, enjoy the Society of each other uninterrupted. My Husband, who has been all this morning at his *Villa*, is just now returned ; and having brought your Friend Monsieur *de P*—— along with him, obliges me to finish my
Letter

Letter sooner than else I should have done; but I shall lose nothing by it, the Time I should have bestowed in writing to you, will be spent in discoursing of you. I doubt not but your good Qualities will be the only Theme all Dinner, God grant my Countenance does not betray the Disorder of my Heart—Adieu—I never write without telling you a thousand times over that I love you—but I am afraid it will be impossible for me ever to say how much—



A BILLET, written the next Morning in Bed.

YOU see, my lovely Friend ! 'tis not impossible to be innocent and happy; at least, I hope, I was not the only Person blest'd those three dear hours, in which I yesterday enjoyed your Society—Yes; the Regret, with which you parted from me, convinces me of the pleasure you took in having me with you, tho on Terms not the most suitable to your Inclinations.—Ah! what a glorious Conquest have I gained?—How does my Soul exult with virtuous Pleasure? To subdue my *own* Desires, is sure praise-worthy; but to have the power of *yours*—to stop the wild Career of untam'd Love, in the proud Heart
of

of arbitrary *Man*, is Victory indeed!—
 Now, I'm assur'd, you love me!—Love
 me as you ought, and if my vital Blood
 could pay the generous Compliance, I'd
 gladly shed the last dear Drop to prove my
 Gratitude——You now are all that I
 could *wish*, and more, far more than I
 could *hope*——all excellent!——all Angel, in
 the shape of *Man*!——What did I not suf-
 fer last night (joy'd as I was in your de-
 lightful Presence) for fear your *Passion*
 should get the better of your *Reason*? and
 when I permitted you to take those little
 Freedoms, which neither Honour nor De-
 cency could refuse, I saw the Conflict in
 your Soul, and pity'd you——Your steal-
 ing Sighs——your Starts——your Trem-
 blings——your blushing Cheeks, and fiery
 Eyes, confess'd the inward Strugglings of
 your warring Thoughts too plain, for me
 to suspect (as perhaps some Women would
 do on the like Occasion) that it was Dis-
 taste, Coldness, or any thing but that im-
 plicite Obedience to my Will, which all,
 who would be thought to love, should pay,
 enabled you to keep the Promise you made
 me. Behold, how I lose myself in the
 Thoughts of you, I had but one moment I
 could call my own since I came from you,
 and that I have employed in writing to you.
 My Husband, who rose early, in order to
 take the Air this morning, and has pre-
 h
 vail'd

vail'd on me to accompany him, is dress'd,
and coming into my Chamber to call me,
and I am yet in Bed——Heaven forbid
he should ever discover the Reason of my
want of Complaisance.——Farewell, I
expect to hear from you before Noon.



LET-



LETTER IX.

I Receiv'd your Letter, as I do every
 thing which comes from you, with
 Raptures of unfeign'd Affection:
 But what, my Dear! my more than ever
 dangerous Charmer! can you believe I
 think of the Contents?—Sure, all the Gods
 of Love and Wit conspire to aid you, each
 striking Syllable melts my Resolves, thrills
 my transported Soul with guilty Extasies,
 and hurries every Sense——While you
 say, you always will retain the most strict
 regard for the *Preservation* of my Virtue,
 you express yourself in such a manner as
destroys it quite——My very Reason too
 now turns against me, and pointing out
 the Wonders of your Merit, applauds my
 Passion, and condemns Resistance——To
 what then shall I fly?—to Religion——
 alas! Love finds a way to reconcile even
 that, for in adoring you, I adore the Power
 h 2 which

which form'd such Excellence—the more
 I think, the more I am confounded, and
 every Argument I alledge to save me, plunges
 me deeper in a Sea of Fondness——
 Whither, Oh! whither will the Torrent
 drive me?—against the daring, the presumptuous
 Lover: *Pride* arms us for Defence; but when
 Despair appears, adorn'd like yours, it undermines
 the Fort, and baffles Force——You have found
 the way to wind yourself into my very Soul,
 robb'd me of all the means of Opposition,
 and, by an artful yielding, conquer!——
 You are become so much a part of me, that,
 methinks, I should have no Reserve, no
 separate Views——It was only the terrible
 Apprehensions of being slighted and abandoned
 by you, when I had nothing farther to bestow,
 has hitherto restrain'd me from granting
 all unbounded Love could ask; and, if those
 Apprehensions cease——if I'm assur'd of your
 eternal Gratitude and Truth, how then shall I
 find words to form Denials?——You are a *Man*,
 'tis true, but then you are not, or at least I
 cannot think you are, compos'd of that same
 fickle and irresolute Stuff most of your Sex
 are made of——No, Heaven, to that lovely,
 that most perfect Form, has join'd a Mind
 as faultless: You have Honour, Wisdom,
 and Good-Nature; the first of these excellent
 Qualities makes it impossi-
 ble

ble for you to pretend a Passion where you have none, and the two last ever to use her with an *Indifference*, whom you once believ'd worthy the most zealous *Ardour*—When a Woman is forsaken, it is not so much the Effect of want of Merit in *herself*, as in the Person she has made *choice* of. We see the most tender, faithful, and most lovely of our Sex, after possession, slighted and contemned; but is not this wholly owing to the wavering Disposition of the *Man*? Certainly. What Character therefore can such a Wretch expect, but Fool, Villain, or both?—To suspect *you* then, would be an Impiety one cannot, knowing you, be guilty of—no; you have no Tincture of Deceit, no base Alloy of Artifice, or Hypocrisy sullies the Brightness of that Angelick Nature.—I could confide in you enough to hazard all—but yet, I wish, you would be satisfy'd with what I have already granted; for though I cannot think obliging you a Crime, my unfortunate Circumstances will make it appear so to the World—That Demon, Law!—curs'd, curs'd Decorum! and tyrannick Rules, bar up my way to your Embrace, and fright me from my Joys—I know you will tell me, these Considerations are *selfish*, and that Love, if real, will overlook, or scorn, such Obstacles——Oh! too, too sure, it will——my yielding Soul

Soul avows the Almighty Truth, and, in a Sigh, relinquishes Objection——Oh! never did any *Man* deserve like *you*——never was any *Woman* susceptible like *me*!——’Tis but a Day since I beheld you, and yet it seems an Age——I go with my Husband this Evening to the *Opera*; I wish you would be there, he cannot avoid seeing you, and will certainly invite you to come into our Box; we must both indeed be under a Constraint before him, but still we shall be together——be near, be close to each other; and is not that, my charming Friend! a Happiness either of us would go thro greater Difficulties to obtain? Besides, there are a thousand soft Amusements, which even his Presence cannot deprive us of——I shall often drop my Fan,—my Glove,—my Handkerchief, to give you an Opportunity of restoring them to me——You may present me with Sweetmeats—Fruit—Snuff—and what hinders but all these little Gallantries may be accompany’d with Looks, which may explain our meanings to each other, tho unintelligible to any but our-selves: My Husband is little vers’d in the Language of the Eyes; or if he were more so, entirely unsuspecting of my Conduct, or your Designs, he will be wholly taken up with regarding the Musick, and I promise myself an unconceivable Satisfaction in this stolen Delight.

light,——Ah! how cruel is my Fate,
 which will not permit me publickly to avow a Passion, which for its Zeal, its Purity, and Truth, might be the Wonder of the admiring World, and shame those little wanton Heats, and Starts of Fancy, which, while they *wear*, *disgrace* the name of Love!——I wish, methinks (with what pleasing Impossibilities do I beguile the Time!) I could wish, I say, not only that I were unmarried for your sake, for then our Fortunes would be too much upon an Equality to make the Deference I would pay you remarkable; but to be something eminently great—something beyond even wild Ambition's Aim, that nobly scorning all my scepter'd Slaves, I might, from all the Race of Man, chuse you, adorned with Constancy and native Worth, to place my envied Glories on your Head, proud in the Title of your Wife alone——or I could like——not that for ten thousand Worlds I would have any Mischief reach you——but it would please me to hear you were reduced to some great strait, something which threaten'd even your very Life, and which nothing could redeem you from, but my hazarding my own. How gladly would I lay it down, and feel no Pangs in Death, but those which leaving *you* would cause?——How romantick would this appear to the generality of Lovers——I mean
 those

those who are called such, for to conceal a multitude of vastly different Views, that noble Appellation serves: In *Courtship*, it either clokes that brutal Appetite which Humanity ought to be ashamed of, or, if possible, a yet more fordid Aim, vile Interest——after *Marriage*, 'tis often worn for form; many Couples, whatever Reasons joined them, having been obliged to *put on* the Mask, are too modest to *pluck it off*, and cannot endure to avow the Dissimulation they have been guilty of, tho' they continue it with Pain——Believe me, 'tis to some such ends we are indebted for the number of Inamorato's which we daily hear of: A refin'd, sincere, and disinterested Passion is a Prodigy, which so few are capable of conceiving, that those, whose Years have made them past, or more serious Avocations have taken off the Follies of *counterfeiting* it, look on the *Reality* to be but notionary. But I resolve to be a living Proof, and if no happy Opportunity arrives, whereby I may confute the ill-judging World; yet you! you who are all the World to me, shall own yourself belov'd, to such a pitch of Elegance, as *Thought*, your boundless Sublimity of Thought, alone, can reach—I would say more, but am interrupted——Adieu——Dear Vanquisher of my Soul, adieu.

P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

THE Person who obliged me to break off so abruptly, was Mademoiselle de _____. I hoped I never should have had occasion to mention her any more to you, but her Mother (curse on the designing Beldame) makes a Ball next Tuesday at her House at *Auteville*. Her Pretence is to return those Civilities she received at my *Husband's* Entertainment, and that which you made at *Vincennes*; but I see thro the Contrivance: 'Tis for your sake alone she would appear magnificent; the Daughter's Vanity, and the Mother's Partiality, mistake the Gallantries you paid them for the Effects of Love, and both of them speak of you in a manner, which declares they are not insensible of your Merit——Now keep your Promise!——Now hold your Resolution of avoiding her!——if any part of that Tendernefs you have professed for me be real, mortify the Pride of this Woman, and refuse the Invitation——to excuse going, you may feign some slight Indisposition, and be let blood; I would make the same Pretence, but that I fear it would appear like too great a Sympathy between us; and since I am obliged to go, you may depend on having as faithful an Account of every thing that passes, as if

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you

you were there yourself——Do not, therefore, fail to comply with this one Request, nor grudge to lose a little of your Blood, to gratify her, who would willingly part with all hers to do you Service.



LET-



LETTER X.

A H! what an Alteration has a few hours made in my Condition! With what Tranquillity did I yesterday sit down to write! And with what Confusion do I now begin!——I fear, my dearest Friend, I am undone.——Ever since we came from the *Opera* last night, my Husband has appeared in such Disorder, as I am too well acquainted with his Humour, to believe could spring from any trivial Cause——I do not remember ever to have seen him in so great a Perplexity since the unfortunate hour I became his Wife: He has, without doubt, taken notice of something between us, which has alarmed him; but though I have recollected every thing that passed yesterday, I am far from being able to guess at the Occasion: but

that some fatal one has happened, I am but too well assured—Had you not (Oh how I tremble with the Apprehension!) any of my Letters in your Pocket, which by some Accident you might drop?—I fear, in spite of my repeated Prayers, you have not burn'd them—Confess the Truth, for Heaven's sake, and ease me of this terrible Incertitude—my Thoughts are on a Rack—If by your Negligence I am betray'd, there is not a *Woman* upon Earth so miserable as myself, nor *Man* so guilty as you—*If!* did I say?—Alas! too sure 'tis so—what else could have happened since last night to create so sudden a Change in his Disposition—You saw how gay—how easy and unconcerned he was all the time of the *Opera*—yet as soon as he came home, he shut himself into his Closet, refused to sup with me; and when he went to Bed, spoke not a word to me, but sigh'd, as if his Heart were cleaving with each Breath he fetched. I durst not ask him the Reason of his Chagrin, for fear of being told what would have struck me dead with Shame; but pretended to fall fast asleep, that I might the better observe him—*Oh unfortunate Opera*, said he, *how dearly have I purchased the Pleasure of seeing thee!*—What Interpretation can I put on these words, but the most dreadful one my Thoughts can form?—Early in the morning

morning he rose, walked hastily about the Chamber, then called to have his Coach got ready, and is this moment gone to my Father's; for the Servants told me since, that he ordered to be drove there—Now tell me! now, lovely Ruiner! advise me what to do!—Assist me in this cruel Extremity—he is this moment, without doubt, complaining of me to my Parents—they will both soon be here, and, perhaps, bring with them a Testimony, too plain, of my Perfidy, for me to entertain the least hope of an Evasion—How shall I stand the Shock?—How bear the just Upbraidings of an injured Husband?—How endure the Rage of an incens'd Father?—or the more piercing Tears of a fond tender Mother, whose only Grief is for my Shame—Heaven! what will become of me?—Oh that my Life were of as short a Date as my Reputation!—that I could die e'er see the Faces of those I have wronged!—What will it avail me to say, I have been guilty of no real Crime?—Who will give Credit to my words, when such Appearances are against me? Or will the number of Examples of Wives, who have sinned against their Husbands in this manner, serve as an Authority for me?—Will all your Stock of Charms and Merit be a sufficient Plea for my Defence? Oh! no, those partial Judges will be blind,

be

be deaf to all but Rage and Indignation—
 But, if they were not, if (which sure, to
 Persons interested as they are, would be
 the greatest of Impossibilities) I could per-
 suade them to regard you with *my* Eyes—
 to think no otherwise of my *Fault* than as
 of a *Misfortune*, which I could not, know-
 ing you, prevent; yet, even then, I were
 the most miserable of Women: for, Oh!
 my dear Undoer! how should I be able to
 avoid condemning you? What Excuses
 could my ingenious Love invent, of force
 enough to engage my *Reason* to forgive you?
 Must not my fond Heart confess you guilty
 of both Imprudence and Infidelity, and
 mingle Hatred with its Dotage? Have I
 not commanded—have I not conjur'd you,
 a thousand and a thousand times, to burn
 those dangerous Testimonies of my Af-
 fection, and is not your Disobedience—
 your Refusal worthy my most severe Re-
 sentment?——If my Suspicion wrongs
 you, believe I find my Punishment in my
 Crime, and that, in but imagining I have
 occasion to accuse you, *my Soul* feels all those
 Tortures, *yours* would merit if my Fears
 are just—What is it, which the World calls
 valuable, I would not joyfully resign, that in
 exchange I might be bless'd with the assu-
 rance of your Innocence? And how many
 improbable Conjectures do I form, that
 my Husband's Ill-Humour proceeds not
 from

from Jealousy? But 'tis too visible, and I endeavour to deceive myself in vain—his Return will shortly bring the cruel Certainty; but if I yet am dear to you, if my Peace, my Honour, or my Life be of any estimation with you, I beg to hear from you before——Arm me, at least, for this terrible Encounter; and if you cannot excuse what you have done, let me not think you want Contrition for so ruinous an Accident; for that would add to my Affliction, a Load more grievous, than all my Husband's, or my Parents Rage, is capable of oppressing me with. Farewel—may you be ever happy, whatever Miseries are decreed for me.



*A BILLET, sent immediately
after.*

BE comforted, my Soul's adored! be comforted. As I have made you Partaker of my Grievs, be now also Partaker of my Joy!—The moment I had sent my Letter, my Husband returned with as much *Satisfaction* in his Countenance, as he went out with *Discontent*; plucking off his Glove last night at the *Opera*, he drop'd a Diamond Ring, worth between five and
fix

fix hundred Pistoles; and thinking it too late to go back to the Theatre in search of it, would not give me the Vexation of hearing he had so great a Loss, till he was past all hopes of recovering it: (How little is he acquainted with my Sentiments? and how much more easy had I been to have known the Truth, though it had been twice as many Thousands?) This morning, as I have before informed you, he went to my Father; but it was only to engage him to prepare me for the Misfortune, in case he should not be able to retrieve it——But he was more lucky than he expected; the Man, who takes care of the Boxes, found the Ring, and restor'd it immediately on his Enquiry: The Adventure has put him into so good a Humour, that he is preparing for our little Journey to *Auteville* with all the pleasure imaginable. The Place of Rendezvous, for all the Company to meet, is the great Walk in the *Tuilleries*, where I intreat (in spite of the Resolutions of yesterday) I may not fail to find you——it will be no Feast to me, if you are not there, and I doubt not but you will behave yourself to Mademoiselle *de*——in such a manner, as shall give me no just Occasion of Suspicion; and I promise never to think *myself* affronted, till I am *really* so.



THE French Editor speaks of a great number of Letters succeeding these; of which no more were preserv'd than the three following ones, and which seem to be written a long time afterwards.



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LET-



LETTER XI.


 T is most true, thou dear Disposer of my Fate! it is most true, that I was one of those who advised you to go for *England*; but I could not have believed you would have been brought so easily, if at all, to form so cruel a Resolution——Good God!—how much has my fond Heart deceived itself——You have then determined for the fatal Voyage, and make no Difficulty to tell me so——What? said I, *no Difficulty*! alas! you tell it me with a barbarous *Tranquility*! an Unconcern more stabbing even than the parting with you——you go to-morrow——go! without hopes of seeing me again these two years——and yet you talk more calmly of it, than once you would of a Week's Absence——Yes, ingrateful and forgetful Man! there *was* a time when every little Separation merited Regret; when by your
 Intimacy

Intimacy with my Husband, you unsuspected saw me every day, *Night* always found the History of your Love unfinish'd — What tender Languishments *then* accompany'd your Adieus ! — What soft Complaining ! — What reluctant Sighs *then* manifested your Concern to leave me ! And when, at last, oblig'd, by cruel Forms, to part, how oft would you attempt to go, how oft return, repeat each fond Endearment o'er and o'er, and yet have something still to say, which a kind Billet would the next morning bring me ; a thousand nameless Soul-seducing Arts your Passion *then* inspir'd you with — Heaven ! why is *Man*, for Godlike Reason, and for Strength of Soul, renown'd above our Sex, when Falshood and Deceit make up his Being ? The fleeting *Air* wears not more Shapes than does his changing Temper ! Nor are the inconstant *Seas* less true to those who trust them — Basely ungenerous ! thankless ! are you all ! meanly submissive, fawning, when you *sue* — insolent, proud, and pityless *entreated* — Art *thou* not so ? — and thou art sure the best — the very best, and most untainted of thy kind — so sweet ! so kind ! so lovely ! and so wise ! that but for mutability in Love thou wouldst be all Divine ! — I am not *jealous* now, nor do I think, in the long Series of our tender Friendship, you ever had a Wish beyond

me : 'tis what you *may*, not what you *have* been guilty of, torments me. Absence and Distance are cruel Foes to Love ; and, Oh ! you leave me (that's the Thought which racks me) with so slight an Impression of my Idea, that it will be no difficult matter for the next face you see, more beautiful than mine (which Heaven knows is easy to be found) to drive me from your Memory for ever——Forgive the Transports of my beating Heart, nor judge so meanly of me, as to believe me partial enough to my own Happiness to wish your Stay—No, go where your Fortune sends you—obey a cruel Mother, and sacrifice to Interest and to Duty all——all but your Wishes——still let them be mine——still let me preserve the envy'd Place I held in your Esteem, and I'll absolve my Fate from all Injustice——Great God ! what Inconsistencies does my good Opinion of you suggest ?——Where are the Assurances you can give me of your Constancy ?——How can I entertain Hopes, which, with so much Reason, appear fallacious even in their Formation ?——If, in me 'twas the Effects, as sure it was, of a refin'd disinterested Passion to bid you go ; had yours been such, it had oblig'd your *Stay*——no ; 'tis too plain, Ambition is now your darling Mistress, and content with having been able to seduce me from my Duty,
corrupt

corrupt my Innocence, triumph over my Weakness, and get the better of my Virtue, you leave me, without *regret*——
 Leave me, to see me——when?——Oh Heavens!——perhaps——no more!——If I thought it too much to be separated from you but by a few *Streets*, and curs'd those interposing Houses, which barred the Prospect of that dear Place where you resided from my Window, how shall I endure to continue in a *Kingdom* where you are not?——If every Day was lost in which I saw you not, and the succeeding Night still brought on Tears, how shall my Soul support so tedious an Absence?——two Years!——two Ages!——an Eternity of Woe!——Will not each hour yield me Encrease of Misery?——Will not Reflection still grow stronger in me? And Grief, Remorse, Fear, Jealousy, and Despair rack me alternately with incessant Horror——till they distract, or send me to my Grave?——Yes, this most wretched, this abandon'd Woman, will shortly discharge you of your Vows; and, e'er you yet reach *England*, perhaps, my Soul (for that permission is all I ask of Heaven) may find its way before you, and clothe itself anew in bodied Air, to meet your Landing——To what an extravagant pitch does the Whirlwind of my Passion bear me? Confused, and wild, I know not what I say——Re-
 gard

gard me not ; for if thou dost, I know, in spite of what my Desperation made me utter, thou yet hast Love enough to hazard all——Remember, when Reason held Dominion o'er my Thoughts, how often, and how strenuously I have press'd thee to this Voyage ; nay, chide that Tenderness which engag'd thy Stay——But Oh ! there's mighty Difference betwixt a *distant* and a *present* Woe——I dare trust myself to reflect no farther for fear of a Relapse——Let me see you this Evening, as soon as possible, to consult measures for our frequent writing to each other——Miserable Consolation for a Loss like mine ! yet it is all my Fate allows after this night——this last dear, cruel night——Wou'd to God it were also the last of my Life, and that I could be so happy as to die, before I speak that dreadful word, *Adieu*.



LET-

LETTER XII.

 T is now three Days since your
 Departure, yet I have receiv'd no
 Letter from you: Is this the Effect
 of all your tender Promises and Imprecations,
 that not one should pass without
 your writing to me?——Was that in-
 chanting Softness of your parting words,
 and the Tears which accompany'd them,
 owing only to a short-liv'd Pity? And if
 there was a necessity that I should be aban-
 doned, is there also a *Necessity* that I must
 be *forgotten*?——Yes, yes, thou dear
 Destroyer of my Soul, the great Affair you
 go on——Variety of Objects, and a thousand
 gay Amusements, which must attend
 where'er you come in place, have already
 blotted out the Memory of your Passion
 and my Sufferings——Full of the hopes
 of future Grandeur, you go in search of
 Fame and Honour, while I am left to
 mourn

mourn the Loss of mine, to count the tedious Hours, to number out my Days in Sighs, and hasten Time in vain—Alas! no Time can e'er retrieve my Innocence, or restore me to that Peace of Mind which thou hast robbed me of—Forgive the Unkindness of that rash Expression, when to thy Merits I resigned my all, I had, in recompence, Joys! which could never be too dearly purchas'd: For ten bless'd years who ever knew Felicity like mine! Transports on Transports still were multiply'd! and from that ne'er to be, by me, forgotten Hour in which I saw you first, down to that dreadful one of your Departure, I found I still grew nearer to your Soul! each ravishing Testimony of our mutual Tenderness gave *you new Passion! me new Happiness!* And after such a glorious Day, if a long Night of Woe succeeds, I ought not to complain——No; by the Remembrance of my Pleasures past—by the Heart-rending Pangs I suffer now—by the charming Hopes thy well-known Truth inspires—and by the agonizing Fears thy cruel Silence gives! I swear, I do not—will not—cannot e'er repent that I have known and lov'd such Excellence—nor would I, if 'twere in my power, forgo some rapturous Reflections, though to regain that dull Tranquillity I enjoyed before. Are all those dear Ideas wholly extinct

tinct in thee? Can it be possible thou canst
 so suddenly be chang'd from the fond
 melting *Lover* to the designing *Statesman*?
 Couldst thou not spare, in all these three
 long Days, one moment's time to tell me
 that thou still wer't mine? Or with thy
 Love hast thou thrown off all Pity too,
 and Complaisance, that you can neither
 feel, nor *feign*, at least, to feel some of
 those Pains you give? Was it to prolong
 my *Miseries*, you were so lavish of your
 Tenderneſs, to conjure me to preserve my
Life? Does it afford greater Triumph to
 your Pride, that I should die by your *Dis-*
dain, than by your *Absence*?——It is not
 ——cannot be——and when I consider the
 Impossibility of so strange a Transforma-
 tion, it fills me with a thousand Terrors,
 that some pernicious Accident has hap-
 pen'd, more dreadful to my Imagination
 than all I have nam'd can be——Num-
 berless Mischiefs wait on Travellers, and
 should any fatal one have overtaken thee,
 how wouldst thou, in the other World,
 forgive the Injustice of my Doubts!——or
 how could I forgive myself!——Grant,
 Heaven! thou mayst be ever safe——be e-
 ver well, whate'er becomes of me——
 Still may thy Guardian Angel hover round
 thee! and, in case of Danger, call down
 to thy Assistance whole Myriads of illu-
 strious Spirits——Farewel, my dearest, my
 1 eternal

eternal Charmer!——You cannot give me so welcome a Proof of *your* Love, as to tell me you are in Health——nor can I give you a greater of *mine*, than to assure you, that your Life and Prosperity are my chiefest Care, and the Continuance of your Affection but my second Wish.



LET.



LETTER XIII.

Writ the same Day.

PARDON me, O God of my Desires! Pardon me, I beseech you, for disobeying the Injunction you laid on me at our parting, not to afflict myself with causless Fears—I ought indeed to have known you better, than to imagine there was a possibility for you (whose every Action is influenced by Justice and by Truth) either to deceive or scorn me, and to have imputed my Misfortune of not hearing from you to any Reason, rather than your Unkindness or Neglect—but my *Excess* of Love (if that can be called so, which is inspired by such an Object) has often led me into the like Errors; and as I can *alledge* nothing else in my Vindication, so I am confident I *need* no more to

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render

render me excusable——How much unable am I to exprefs what 'twas I felt, when, immediately after I had fent my Letter, I received both yours, which, by fome neglect in the Officers, had been detained at the Post-house——Such a mixture of Surprize and Extasy——fuch a wild Torrent of o'erflowing Pleasure, as furely none but thofe who taſte can gueſs at, ruſhed thro each Vein, and ſwelled me even to burſting——ſcarce could your Prefence give me fiercer Joys——Oh thou for ever lov'd! for ever worſhipp'd! What ſhall I ſay?——What ſhall I do to compenſate for all thy matchleſs Faith——thy matchleſs Tenderneſs?——All the Ideas formful Fancy feigns——all the exemplary Tales of Conſtancy, of Purity, and Zeal, are poor, and want of thy Perfection——Methinks, I now no more regret our Separation; Virtue is not Virtue till 'tis tempted, and Abſence is a fiery Tryal, through which Love ſeldom paſſes, without loſing great part of its Brightneſs; but thine, I am confident, will remain unſully'd, increaſe in Value, and gain a nobler Luſtre by ſo dangerous a Proof——Yes, I will ceaſe Complaints, and till that happy point of Time arrives, which ſhall reſtore us to more ſolid Joys, beguile the others with the delightful Imagery of Contemplation! Remembrance of the *old* and frequent Letters ſtill affording

new Themes of Bliss, will make the hours slide pleasingly away, and we shall *meet* again, before we know we have been *divided*; if those may be properly said to be *divided*, whose *Souls*, like ours, are *united*. You tell me that (next to the seeing me) you desire nothing more, than that there were a possibility of my being sensible, not only of every thing you say and do, but also of every Thought which passes in your Heart——'Tis wondrous kind that tender Wish——and, in requital, I must inform you, that the utmost of *my* Ambition (making your own Reserve) is to have the power, in words as expressive and as forcible as yours, to let you know how full —— how absolute your Dominion is o'er *mine*! —— How much you govern all my Words and Actions——and with what an Infinity of Pleasure each willing Sentiment avows your Sway! —— Oh thou transporting Dear! Wou'd Heaven, to make me worthy of thee, add to my *Beauty*, and inspire my *Wit*, till both appear'd as pure, as sparkling, and as lasting as my *Love*, I should have nothing left to ask——but as I am, thus dress'd in languid Charms, I am ashamed that I *possess* so much, *deserve* so little——Forbear then, I conjure thee, from this time forward, to give me Praises not my Due, but always continue to think my Passion a sufficient Merit, to counterbalance

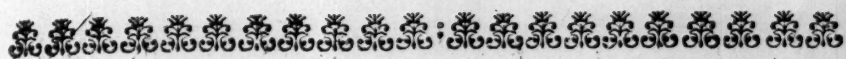
lance all other Imperfections—See! what a cruel Accident now puts me in mind to what a Distance you are removed; the Boy, who waits to carry this to the Post, acquaints me, that my Time is almost elapsed, and obliges me to bid you Adieu, long before my Inclination would permit me.

The End of the Letters.



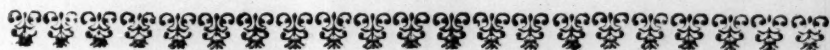
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A
DISCOURSE
CONCERNING
WRITINGS
Of this Nature.

By Way of ESSAY.







A DISCOURSE *concern- ing Writings of this Nature, by way of Essay.*

THE *Inconveniences*, not to mention the *Dangers*, which there are in holding a Correspondence, such as the preceding *Letters*, are so well known, that an Endeavour to display what is obvious to the meanest Capacity, may, perhaps, be looked on as impertinent by Ladies, who boast a Superiority of Discernment; but as it is by those only I am ambitious to be read, I must beg leave to remind them, that it is that very Elegance of Soul, and refined Genius, which, while it raises them above the rest of their Sex, makes them sometimes too apt to despise those necessary Cautions, without which, their *Wit*, like an un-governed Courser, will be ready to plunge, not only their Reputation, but their Peace of Mind, into a Sea of Troubles; out of which it must be with all the difficulty in the World, if ever, they are recovered.

Letters from a Woman, distinguished for her Beauty, Wit, Virtue, or any other Excellence, are so great and valuable a Token of her Regard

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for

for the Person to whom they are written, that it is not to be wonder'd at, that *Men* should, by all possible Assiduity, endeavour to obtain so undeniable a Proof of Favour; it is a kind of Food for their Ambition, their Love, and, too often, their Vanity: but what a *Woman* gains by her Condescension (besides the Reputation of a Talent, which had better be eternally concealed, than made use of this way) I cannot find out.

There are no two things more inexpressibly distant in their Consequences, than *Wit* and *Wisdom*; in confidence of the *one*, we run precipitately into any Labyrinth the Gaiety of Youth and Fancy may lead us to, nor doubt to find a Clue at pleasure which will extricate us; but the *other* inspires self-preserving Fears, fastens the Chain of Thought, and bids us stand upon our guard: therefore, where the *former* abounds, if there is not a great Stock also of the *latter*, the Owner will be liable to many Inadvertencies in her Conduct. What dares not a Woman do, when she fancies herself a *Wit*? secured by that, as she believes, impenetrable Rampart, she defies not only all the Darts of Flattery from without, but the secret Workings of Nature, and her Sex's Tenderness within; and for want of calling a Counsel of her Thoughts, suffers the Fortrefs of her Honour to be beaten down by the more watchful *Foe*, or surrendered by the treacherous *Inmates*.

Frequent Examples make good the Truth of this Assertion; and as there is scarce a possibility for a Woman, famed for any Perfection, to escape Sollicitations of this nature; so in the resisting them lies the greatest Proof of her *Wisdom*, as well as *Virtue*. How often have I heard some Ladies say, when they find themselves attacked, *I will write to this Fellow,—pretend an equal Regard,—and when I have raised his Hopes and his Desires, then*
turn

turn him into Ridicule, and make him know the Artifice of Love is vain, when used to a Woman of Wit. —

Thus do they unawares entangle themselves ! But, alas ! how common is it for a little Time and Affiduity in the Man to triumph over this Resolution, and how dear does the fair Deceiver, caught in her own Snare, pay for the Experiment ? But as this can be the Case only of the *Coquet* Part of the Sex, who are generally too fond of their Follies to be prevailed upon to quit them ; I shall spare my-self and them the Trouble of *fruitless* Admonitions, and leave them to incur the Punishment their Vanity deserves ; that of being often *in Love*, as often *forsaken*, and always *exposed*.

But if there were really no other Dangers in a Conversation of this kind, than the Apprehensions of its being known, and censured by the Malicious and Envious, which are certainly much the greatest part of the World ; the continual Uneasiness which must attend such Fears, one would think, were sufficient to make any Woman, of but common Prudence, avoid the necessity of falling into them : for, as Mr. Udall has it,

*Who would forsake a Walk, whose pleasant Round
With fragrant Flowers and vernal Sweets was
crown'd,
For one where Thorns and Hemlock load the
Ground ?*

And that such a Correspondence, after Marriage, can be held without *Fears*, is absolutely impossible. In the first Place, a Woman had need be well assured as to the Honour of the Man to whom she writes, that his Vanity—some causeless Quarrel—or a new, and one whom he may think, a more agreeable Correspondent, may not, some time or other, influence him to expose her.

Opinion is partial, and those of the best Sense have often been deceived in the choice of their Friends. I remember to have heard a Story very credibly reported of a Gentleman, who to gratify the Ill-Nature and Malice of a Lady (whom he either loved, or had some potent Reasons to feign a Passion for) so artfully counterfeited one for another, that he at last drew into a Conversation, which, if not the Destruction of her Virtue, was most certainly so of her Reputation; and having completed his Design, made his successful Court to her Rival, with those Trophies of his Conquest, her Letters in his hand, which the *Prude* immediately published, to the utter Ruin of the unfortunate, but too easy Believer. That such a Contrivance was base to the last degree, it must be confessed; and we cannot imagine there are many Men (especially among those of a liberal Education) who would, in this manner, sacrifice any one Woman to the Resentment of another: yet notwithstanding, all wise People will guard themselves against even a possibility of Danger. Considering the Artifices which are daily used in Affairs of this kind, 'tis not very easy to discover a *real* Passion from a *counterfeit*. If a Woman loves, she is too inclinable to interpret every Action as she would wish to have it, and as all Passions are at Enmity with Reason, this is the least possible of any to be reconciled to it; for by the sweetness of its first Approaches, it makes us more *unwilling* than *unable* to drive it from our Souls. The pleasing Ruin comes dressed all in Smiles, nothing so delightful as the first Dawnings of a rising Tenderness, and we think 'tis doing too great a Violence to our Nature, to cloud so sweet a Sun-shine with Reflection. Some indeed there are, who have Solidity enough to weigh the Consequence, to discern the distant Storm before it
breaks

breaks upon them; but wanting Resolution to take shelter from it, are the most miserable of all: 'tis better in such a case to have no Reason at all, than not to have enough. The happy *Idiot*, blest in Security, postpones not her Misfortune; and, perhaps, for many Years enjoys a state of Tranquillity; while the *Woman of Wit*, with aking Heart, perceives from far, the Ruin she is sure to meet, and fain would fly, but cannot.

But suppose this is not the case, and that we have found a Person really adorn'd with Honour, Wisdom, Gratitude, Secrecy, and Truth; and that a long Acquaintance, and deep Inspection into his Nature and Principles, make the Liking such a one more the effect of *Judgment* than *Fancy*; which, by the way, does not very often happen: not but there are Men who deserve more than Eloquence can speak; but then they are but few, and 'tis seldom that such a one falls to the Lot of a Woman of *Merit*.

*Sincerity, like Fortune, still is blind,
The Faithful, rarely do the Faithful find:
'Twould too much take our Wishes from above,
Shou'd we, on Earth, Heav'n's choicest Blessing*
(*prove.*)

But if two such, equally worthy, equally loving and belov'd, by Miracle shou'd meet; yet, even then, a Woman of nice Honour cannot think herself secure: Letters often live longer than the Person who wrote them—they may by some Accident be lost—may miscarry—somebody must be trusted to convey 'em, and the Fidelity of such sort of People is not much to be depended on.—But if all these Apprehensions should be likewise remov'd; if the *Confidant* be a Person of approv'd Discretion and Truth;—if the Parties concerned, contrive some Form of Writing unintelligible to all

all the World but one another—if to prevent Suspicion, if even the Hand should be seen, they are burnt as soon as read; yet what is all this Circumspection, this Watchfulness, this Guard over every Action, Word, and Look, but a continual Slavery, which, methinks, a Soul design'd for Liberty should scorn.

But the greatest, and most tormenting fear of all, is, that we have, or ought to have, of ourselves: when once a Heart has receiv'd the Impression of an Idea, tho never so slightly, Contemplation strengthens it insensibly; and if we make never so many Resolutions to contain ourselves in the bounds of the most strict Reservedness, we cannot be sure but some unguarded Moment may arrive, in which *Passion* may triumph over *Reason*: Paper cannot blush, and our Thoughts, in spite of us, will often take a greater liberty in expressing themselves that way, than the natural Bashfulness of Virtue will permit 'em to do any other. But if it goes not so far, we are fill'd, at least, while thus employ'd, with Sentiments not at all to the advantage of those Principles we ought to cherish: besides, the answering any Letters of this kind, is a sufficient Encouragement to the Man to proceed; and I have somewhere read,

*The Pen can furrow a fond Female's Heart,
And pierce it more than Cupid's talk'd-of Dart:
Letters, a kind of Magick Virtue have,
And, like strong Philters, human Souls enslave!*

There is certainly an Influence in an artful, tender, and passionate Way of Writing, which more sensibly affects the Soul, than all the Tongue can utter: Words, tho never so moving, and with never so great a Grace deliver'd, we may avoid list'ning to, or they may slide from our Memory,

mory, when Letters will remain perpetual *Monitors*. Tho we know each Line is an Arrow aimed at our Virtue or our Peace; our Curiosity, or our Inclination, seldom fails engaging us to peruse them: from that we fall to examining the happy Turn of Thought,—the Elegance of the Expression,—the easy Flow of Stile,—discover unnumbered Beauties in every Sentence,—and admire the *Author's* Love, or Wit, or both, which have inspir'd him with so uncommon a Delicacy: thence we reflect on his Behaviour while he was writing,—think in what manner he look'd—how he sigh'd—what he wish'd—imagine we dive into his very Soul—find out Meanings there, to which, perhaps, he is a stranger—and prepossess'd by this time, construe every thing to the advantage of his Passion, and our own Desires. In this pleasing, but destructive Amusement, we lose our selves so long, that the return of Reason is too weak to drive it from our Minds; we wake indeed from the deluding Dream, but the remembrance of it lasts; and *Doubts* and *Terrors*, mingling with *Hopes* and *Wishes*, make an eternal War within our Bosoms.

This is a State of Life which certainly none wou'd be ambitious of; but as we slide into it by degrees, and unknown, as it were, even to ourselves; our only way of Prevention, is to make the best use of those Fears when they first assail us—that is, to allow them to be just—For, in the first place, no Woman, who had any regard to her Fame, ever put herself so much in the power of a Man, as to write to him, without *believing*, at least, that she might do it with Safety; and in the next, I have that Charity for my Sex, as to imagine, that even those among them who have been led into the most *criminal* Conversations, enter'd

ter'd into 'em with no other View than what
shou'd terminate in Innocence : therefore,

*Tear up the Seeds of the unrooted Ill,
While they are weak, and you have power to kill :
Slip not one Moment ; who defers to-day,
To-morrow may be hardned in Delay.* Tate.

And indeed those little *Fears* seem design'd
by Providence to correct that too great *Softness*,
which is generally found in our Sex : and, tho a
Woman wou'd be a strange sort of a Creature
wanting *Tenderness*, yet where it too much
abounds, or is misapply'd, it commonly needs no
other assistance to draw the Owner into the Path
of Ruin. A Lady of my Acquaintance, perhaps
not without reason, fell one day, as she was sit-
ting with me, into this Poetical Exclamation :

*Softness ! thou Origine of Female Woes !
Thou Spring from which our common Ruin flows !
In vain deceiving Man wou'd kneel and swear,
Were we, like him, hard-hearted and severe :
But, by thy fond Emotions, first betray'd,
Feign'd Sighs, false Vows, with real ones are paid.
We wail Mishaps which to no Heart were known,
But what the Idea raises in our own ;
With Sympathetic Influence idly mourn,
And into Truth the well-wrought Fiction turn :
Then, overwhelm'd in Seas of Passion fall,
And Man, th' unpitying Tyrant, seizes all.*

How much better is it then to force our *Ten-
derness* to yield to our *Fears*, for once, than by a
vain opposition be oblig'd to endure their *Perse-
cutions* for ever ! that is, till we get rid of them
to be tormented by worse Feinds, Remorse and
Despair.

but you'll say, this is a Task much easier *talk'd* of than *perform'd*. I grant it is, and that Love and Nature are Foes too mighty to be vanquish'd without a more than *manly* Resolution: but since that Sex make no difficulty to resolve to throw off their Passion, on the least *Appearance* of any Inconvenience attending it; so I would have *ours*, who have *Certainty* on their side, endeavour with all their Force to be before-hand with them.

I have heard some Ladies (in the Infancy of Love) dispute very warmly in its behalf, declare that they look'd on a state of *Indifference*, to be no better than a state of *Stupidity*; and that they wou'd not part with their Passion, with all the little Fears, Hopes, Wishes, Languishments which attend it, for the World: but, I believe, there are but few in whom this Opinion had any long duration. In a word, according to the Effects it produces in the generality of the World, we may say that Love is a Passion, which, while 'tis kept in subjection, diverts us with a thousand gay Amusements; but the mischief on't is, that from a *Servant* it quickly becomes a *Master*, and, then, no Tyrant so inhuman.

Not but that there are a great many who exclaim against this Passion without any manner of reason; and having gone as far with the receiv'd Opinion of the World, as I thought Justice would permit, I think myself obliged to redeem the name of Love from those Aspersions, the intermixture of other less excusable Passions has drawn upon it: as much, at least, as 'tis in my power, by making those Remarks which have fallen in the compass of my little Observation.

Love varies in his Effects according to the Principles and Disposition of the Person possess'd with it; a *generous* Soul it enflames with a noble Thirst of Improvement, an Ambition to attain those Excellencies

cellencies which may render the Lover worthy of *his*, or *her* Desire; aims more at *deserving* than *possessing*; and if deny'd a suitable Reward, rather pities the *Blindness*, than hates the *Ingratitude* of the Object. In a *mean* and *narrow* Mind, it inspires mean and narrow *Views*, looks no farther than the gratification of its Wishes; to gain, or secure that end, scruples nothing, tho ne'er so vile or treacherous, and failing of it, turns all to Fury and Revenge: 'tis the baseness of our own Natures which often hurries us to extravagant and wicked Actions, when Love bears all the blame. If we see Persons tormenting their Families, and plaguing all the World who know them, with *Jealousy*, we are apt to say, it is because they *love* too well: A *Man*, indeed, whose Honour is at stake, may have some Excuse for Watchfulness over a suspected Wife; but when a *Woman* is jealous of her Husband, or her Lover, it springs not from *Love*, but *Pride*, *Envy*, or something *worse*, which it does not become a Woman's Pen to give a name to: or if we hear of any despairing Wretch, who, disappointed of his Wishes, is ready to lay violent hands on his own Life, 'tis all imputed to *Love*, when, in reality, 'tis owing only to his own devilish and revengeful Disposition.

That *Love*, therefore, which is inspir'd by a *worthy* Object, in a *noble* Mind, is so far from being pernicious, that it fills the Souls of two such Persons with a kind of heavenly Delight: they are bless'd in one another, happy in themselves, and amiable to all who have the good-fortune to be of their Acquaintance.

I am sensible this Digression is foreign to the purpose on which I sat down to write, and that Vanity is a Foible so much in fashion, that a great many may take advantage of my Words, and imagine themselves qualified for that happy Condition

dition I have been describing : but I would advise all such, before they make a Conclusion, to examine carefully, not only their own Hearts, but likewise, as much as in them lies, that of the Person they admire ; and then, I prophesy, the number of those, who in a Life of Love are threatned with a *Hell of Inquietudes*, will infinitely exceed those, promis'd a *Heaven of Felicity*.

But what can those Women expect but Misery, and the Contempt of the Person they admire, who are so weak, or rather forward, as to surrender without a Summons ? Custom, and the more natural Boldness of the Sex, makes Courtship the business of the Man, and where Inclination dictates, the Tongue or Pen will never fail to speak ; but where they are silent on his side, the Woman, sure, can have but little Hope hers will succeed : and she who takes it for a Maxim, that *Love begets Love*, will find herself miserably mistaken. A Gentleman of my acquaintance, who is neither ill-natur'd nor vain, gave me the proof of it the other day, by showing, and giving me leave to publish a Declaration of this kind, which he had lately received from a Lady, for whom he never profess'd any thing more than a common Civility : there was a long prose Letter, but I shall insert nothing but the Tag of Verse which concluded it, for fear my Readers should be as much tired, as the Person to whom it was sent.

*How vain are the Resolves which Lovers make ?
Only in force, till we have power to break :
A thousand times, I, to myself, have sworn,
That on your dangerous Charms I'd gaze no more ;
Far from the Musick of your Tongue wou'd fly ;
Keep my Griefs silent, and in Absence die.*

Yet, when I'm told a *Visit* you'll bestow,
 A sudden Joy does my *Designs* o'rethrow,
 I have no *Breath*—no *Voice* to answer, No. }
 Pleas'd, tho' confus'd, I scarce restrain my Feet
 From wildly running your *Approach* to meet :
 But when you see my *Face*—Oh then ! if e'er }
 You'd learn'd *Love's Lesson*, which the *Looks* declare
 In tender *Characters*, you'd read mine there. }
 But you, alas ! to soft *Desires* a *Foe*,
 My *Transports* cannot, or else will not know :
 When I reflect, how with disdainful *Eye*,
 I've often heard you *Cupid's Shafts* defy ;
 I fain wou'd scorn the *Power* which you despise,
 And quitting *Love*, to nobler *Passions* rise,
 To merit your *Esteem*, ambitious *Aim* !
 Sublimely tow'r, by *Friendship's* sacred *Claim* :
 But ah ! the *Weakness* of my *Sex* denies ; }
 Reason ill-guarded from my *Bosom* flies,
 Nor can withstand th' *Inchantment* of your *Eyes* : }
 The more I look, the more my *Soul* dissolves,
 And *Charms* resistless, melt my fix'd *Resolves* !
 Too lovely, and too wise, with *Honour* use
 This forc'd *Confession* of an artless *Muse*.

But, if there be never so great a *Sympathy* of
Soul between two *Persons*, yet if there be any in-
 dissoluble *Impediment*, such as *Marriage*, former
Contracts, vast *Disparity* of *Birth* or *Fortune*,
&c. to disunite their *Bodies* ; the *Blessings* such an
Amour can produce, will hardly make amends for
 the *Pains*. What *Prospect* can a *Woman* have,
 who has dispos'd of her *Hand* to one, and her
Heart to another, but a dreadful *Chaos* of *Confu-*
sion, a mingled *Mass* of *Shame* and *Guilt*, and not
 one glimmering *Dawn* of *Hope* to guide her thro'
 that *Night* of *Horror* back to *Reason's Day* ?

What shall we do then ? Must we, because we
 are married, shun all *Conversation* but such as we
 are

are sure can have no Title to our Esteem ! or if we chance to see a Person adorn'd with all the Excellencies that Art and Nature can bestow, must we renounce our Senses, be blind and deaf, to be innocent ?—No, certainly, and it wou'd favour more of the *Prude*, than the *Free-Speaker* I profess myself to be, to lay an Injunction so severe: 'tis an utter Impossibility to avoid loving such a one, and I know not, if it wou'd not be a *Sin* to deny one's Admiration to a Person who seems ordain'd by Heaven to attract it. But then, in the *Direction* of that *Love* and *Admiration*, is our *Virtue* and our *Wisdom* to be prov'd ; and I cannot be of that Author's Opinion, who, describing a very lovely Person, says,

*In pity to your Sex, this Man was sent,
That you might love, and yet be innocent :
For sure no Crime with him you can commit ;
Or, if you cou'd, his Form excuses it.*

The Merit of the Person is, I grant, a vast Mitigation of the Faults our Passion for him may prevail on us to be guilty of ; because *Reason* is then no more an Enemy to *Nature*, but gives a Sanction to each unbounded Wish : yet still there are such Things as *Religion*, and the *Esteem of the World*, which, if duly consider'd, will weigh down all other Motives.

But to pursue my Design, which was not to enter any farther into a Discourse of what the World calls *criminal* Conversations, than consists in the *writing* part. The Lady, whose Letters I have taken the liberty to translate, tho she has been cautious enough in expressing any thing (even in those the most tender among them) which can give the Reader an Assurance she had forfeited her *Virtue* ; yet there is not one, but what sufficiently

ciently proves how impossible it is to maintain such a Correspondence, without an Anxiety and continual Perturbation of Mind, which I think a Woman must have bid farewell to her Understanding, before she could resolve to endure.

In the very first she plainly discovers the Agitation of her Spirits, confesses she knows herself in the wrong, and that every Expression her Tenderness forces from her, is a Stab to her Peace; she dreads the Effects of her Lover's too powerful Attractions, doubts her own Strength of resisting such united Charms as she finds in him, and trembles at the Apprehensions, that by some unlucky Accident the Secret should be known. Every thing alarms her; the Visit he made with that Gentleman, whom she calls *Monsieur de P—*, the Loss of the Diamond, and a thousand other little Chances, which, in so long a Conversation, must questionless have happened: 'Tis impossible to be conscious of any thing we wish to conceal, without suspecting the most undesigning Words and Actions as Snares laid to entrap us. As the Thief takes every Bush for a Pursuer, and on the least Rustle which the Wind makes through the Leaves, is ready to lay down the Booty, which, perhaps, he has hazarded his Life to obtain; so this unfortunate Lady, divided between Excess of *Love*, and Nicety of *Honour*, could neither resolve to give a loose to the *one*, nor entirely obey the Precepts of the *other*, but suffered herself to be tossed alternately by both. And tho the Person she loved was most certainly (if such a thing can be) deserving all the Condescensions a Woman could make, by his Affiduity, Constancy, and Gratitude, yet it must be a good while before she could receive those Proofs; and the Disquiets she suffered in that time of Probation, were, I think, if no worse ensued, too dear a Price for the

the Pleasure of being beloved by the most engaging and most charming of his Sex.

If then the bare *Apprehensions* of any Misfortune attending such an Amour, are terrible, what must be the *Certainty*? What Pangs, what miserable Tortures of Reflection must we feel, when, convinced of what we feared, either from the Censures of the un pitying *World*, or the Inconstancy of an ungrateful *Lover* — If, in spite of all imaginable Caution to preserve it, such a private Correspondence be discovered, what dreadful Consequences may attend it? — The Fury of a Husband, so justly enraged, can often be satisfied with nothing less than something fatal to *one* or *both* the Violators of his Honour; or if any Considerations of Self-Love should set a Curb to the Violence of his Resentment that way, either perpetual Quarrels, or eternal Separation, must be her Doom. Nay, put the Case, he should bear his Injuries with a patience which is not to be found in any other Nation, nor very rarely in ours, and he should promise to *forgive* so far as not to reproach her; he never can *forget*: and how can a Wife, so culpable, endure even the Upbraidings of his Looks? What his Tongue forbears to speak, she every moment will discover in his Eyes, each Glance will wound her with Remorse, and call the guilty Blushes to her Cheeks. Nor is it enough, if she know herself innocent of any real Crime, if conscious of having given a just Occasion of Suspicion. *Shakespear* says,

————— *Trifles light as Air,*
Are to the Jealous, Confirmations strong
As Proofs of Holy Writ —————

And I know not, setting Religion apart, if it is not a greater fault, since the ill Conduct of a
Wife

Wife reflects upon the Husband, to give, by too free a Behaviour, the World cause to censure *her* and *laugh* at him, than it would be to grant even the most criminal Condescension with Circumspection : but of the Fears, the Terrors, and continual Disquiets which must attend that Circumspection, I have already said enough, to let my Reader know how blameable I think any one, who enters into a necessity of making use of it.

If, on the other side, a Woman should find herself deceived in the Person for whom she has despised all other Considerations, slighted, and at last forsaken by him ; how far beyond the reach of Words must be the Agonies of such a State ! What Idea of Misery can we form which can come up to the reality of this ! When Thought becomes a Rack, Remembrance a Hell, and *past* Endearments sharpen *present* Pains, as the *Poet* justly expresses it :

*What do the Damn'd endure, but to despair,
And knowing Heaven, to know it lost for ever ?*

And yet, amidst this Horror without a Name—this burning—bleeding—this Heart-rending Anguish, a Woman (if she has still so much Remains of Reason left, as to regard her Character) must be obliged to feign an Insensibility, smother the rising Sighs, dress up her Face in Smiles, wear a composed Serenity in her Countenance, when all the Furies are at work within her, when her Soul swells with just Resentment, and wild Despair disjoins each Faculty, and splits the Brain.—Oh hard Condition ! which while it yields the most exquisite of Torments, forbids us to complain : All *other* Woes exposed, create Compassion, and friendly Pity eases Fortune's Wounds ; but *this* revealed, smarts with severer Pains ! and festers

festers in the open Air. Diffimulation *here* alone can aid us, and shield our Fame from the keen Blasts of Eagle-eyed Detraction; but how difficult a Task 'tis thus to play the Hypocrite, or whether it be possible to do it undiscovered, those only, who have been in so wretched a Circumstance, can justly determine: but the multitude of Instances, which daily furnish out the Tea-Table Conversation, leave us no great room to believe that there are many Proficients in the Art on *this* account, however famous our Sex is esteemed to be in any *other*.

Sometimes too a Woman, besides her own Engagement, is so unfortunate as to place her Affections on a Man who is also married; and what has she not then to fear from such a Rival? No Fury can equalize that of *Female* Jealousy, the prideful Vanity of engrossing a Heart, is a Foible so inherent to our Sex in general, but more especially among the *European* Ladies, that nothing but a true Knowledge of the World, and an exact Scrutiny into ourselves, can make us free from it. From hence therefore it follows, that the *least* worthy have always the *greatest* share of Self-Sufficiency and Conceit, and consequently can less endure to think another, if ever so deserving, should be preferred to her. She will leave no Artifice unpractised to maintain her Prerogative, and ruin the Person who she believes has invaded it; indeed, if the Man be really in love, or have a generous Disposition, on *him* such mean Designs will never work the Effect she aims at; but then she seldom fails of destroying the Reputation of the envied *Woman*: She has the Ceremony of the Church—the Sanction of the Law on her side; as *Cleopatra* says,

D

She

*She bears the spacious Title of a Wife,
To gild her Cause, and draw the list'ning World
To pity her Misfortunes —*

And whether she exclaims with, or without Reason, 'tis all one, the Multitude generally take things upon Credit, few give themselves the trouble of examining the Truth of what they hear, and there is a vicious Depravity in the Natures of most People, which inclines them rather to believe the worst than the best. A Woman indeed, who takes such Measures against her Rival, must not only render herself despicable and hateful to a Husband of any Soul or Spirit, but also provoke him to exert that Authority, which both Divine and Human Law has given him over her, to curb the licentious Clamours of her Rage: But then what she dares not attempt in *publick*, she will be sure to do in *private*; she then works underground like a Mole. And as there are scarce any, if never so worthless, but have their Flatterers; a Wife, in such a Circumstance, will find enough who will humour her Folly, and perhaps, merely for the sake of dear Detraction and Scandal, become her Emissaries of Mischief: These are immediately employed, and from the exhaustless Ocean of her Malice, a thousand Lyes and barbarous Inventions run thro the Currents of their Tongues. Nor does she regard the overwhelming her Husband's Peace of Mind and Reputation, so she can but sink those of the Woman he admires: The irrevocable Tye of Marriage past, nothing can make her less than *Wife*, and, secure of being a Sharer in his Fortune, delights to plague a Heart she fancies she no longer has dominion over: And I think what the most excellent of our *English* Authors, or, I believe, I may venture to say, the

the World affords, has said on a very different Subject, may be properly enough apply'd to a jealous and meanly designing Wife :

*The Village-Cur, by Night, thus barks within,
Arm'd, in close Quarters, with a Mastiff's Grin.*

But how vastly different (as I have before observed) this Passion is from Love, I leave to the judgment of any disinterested Reader : Love is soft, silent, gentle, and humble ; hard to believe Injuries, patient in enduring, and generous in forgiving them : Jealousy imagines Wrongs when they are never meant, is restless and turbulent on Suspicion, and cruel and revengeful on the Certainty : loud, violent, and tempestuous, if let loose ; or basely treacherous, undermining, and malicious, if controlled.

A Woman, therefore, who, in spite of such Obstacles, allows herself to converse with a Man more tenderly than she is willing should be known, walks as in a narrow Path, hedged on each side with Thorns, which there is scarcely a possibility of passing through unhurt, either by domestick Jealousy, or foreign Malice : The Husband's, or the Rival's Rage (if her Director Love has not more Eyes than Argus) will certainly take hold of her, and plant such cruel Marks of Fury on her Character, as Time can never efface.

But of all the Submissions which Love exacts from his Votaries, there is none so little conformable to Reason, as that of endeavouring to regain once lost Affection. You may as easily hope to re-animate the Body, when the Soul has left it, as renew Desire, once dead ; as Mr. Dryden very justly expresses it in the Character of Morat :

*To Love once past, we cannot backward move ;
Call yesterday again, and I may love.*

Yet there are some Women mean-spirited enough to attempt it ; and so weak, as to imagine a foolish Perseverance and continued Tendernefs, after the worst of Usage, will, in time, have Influence over a grateful Mind, and lure the wandering Heart back to its former Fondness : but so far from that, I believe a Woman in greater danger of being abandoned by the Object of her Affection, for loving *too much* than *too little*. If we look into the World, we shall generally find, that the more Merit of that kind a Woman is possessed of, the less she is regarded by her Lover. The inconstant gay *Coquette* may use him as she pleases, he fears to lose, and therefore is assiduous ; while the too-generous, faithful, undesigning Heart, despised, neglected by him, shall groan beneath a Load of Anguish, and, unpitied, break.

This Humour, almost universal among them, is commonly termed Ingratitude ; *that* indeed is the Appendix, but I am of the opinion, there may be another Cause assigned. Every body knows that Men, in their days of Courtship, promise a thousand times more than they ever mean, or indeed can perform ; and there is a kind of Pride, mixed Shame in the Natures of most of them, which makes them use a Person the worse, when conscious they are not able to use her so well as she deserves : and because they cannot keep up to the Protestations they have made, or any way equalize the Favours she has bestowed, disown the Tye, and scorn the Obligation.

But, methinks, if a Woman would give herself leave to reflect, how little a Man (whatever other Excellencies he may be master of) who gives Oc-
casion

casion of Complaint, is worth complaining to, or the small probability there is of having those Grievances redressed by him who has inflicted them ; she would never stoop to a Humiliation, at once so mean and vain. When after, perhaps, Years of Courtship, a thousand Vows and Imprecations, Tears, Sighs, Swoonings, and all the countless nameless Arts of well-dressed Flattery, a Woman has been brought to that degree of tender Passion, as to resign her All—relinquish Honour, Virtue, Interest, hazard her Fame, and everlasting Hopes, to buy the Peace of an inconstant, or deceitful, Lover ; she must be, certainly, of a most abject Soul, who can *intreat* for what she once was *sued* to ; from the *Adored* become the *Suppliant*, and, with a base Submission, pursue, with weeping Eyes, and outstretched Arms, the ungrateful Wretch, who flies the Shrine, where once his Wishes, Hopes, and all his Joys were centered. No, in a Case like this, Pride only is becoming ; and tho the Heart weeps Blood—the Eye-balls start—each Limb, with Tremblings, loses its nervous Use—and inward Horror shakes the whole Fabrick like an Earthquake ; a noble Mind will struggle thro the Pangs, if not *conceal*, *disguise*, under some other Name, the unconquerable Dart, affect, at least, a generous Disdain, and seem to scorn the Scorners.

Not but this Task is difficult, and the more so, because in such a Circumstance we are too apt to suffer a little flattering Parasite, called *Hope*, to linger about the Heart, and tempt us with a thousand pleasing and fictitious Views. Remembrance too becomes our Foe—*What has been, maybe*, says the self-deluded Fair ; *my Eyes had once the power to charm—my Softness once could sooth—and Wit* *enchant—those Graces still remain—they have not—cannot lose their wonted Influence—at least I'll try*
their

their Force—nor yield my Soul a Prey to Grief and to Despair, till further Proof. In this Belief she calls up all her Beauties to her Face, summons in haste all her Attractions to her aid—writes to him—invents a thousand Stratagems to see him—kneels—weeps—and languishes—endeavours to alarm his Memory with the past Pleasures of their mutual Love—to kindle his pity for her present Woes—sooths and upbraids by turns; but all in vain.

*The eager Hurry of Desire once o'er,
We then are lovely, fair, or wise, no more :
All our Defects in Magnitude appear,
And not one Virtue claims a pitying Tear.*

The more we labour for the Attainment of our Wishes, (of whatsoever kind they are) the greater must our Vexation be, when disappointed. We have then the melancholy Reflection, that we have lost our Time, as well as our Desires, and have taken pains for no other purpose than to be contemned; at least, it generally happens so, in the Affair I am speaking of. Some Men, indeed, may have Good-Nature enough to pity a Passion which they no longer have it in their power to reward: but how poor a Relief is that? and how mortified must be the Vanity of that Woman, who finds in the Object of her Affection, a kind of a Regret and Uneasiness for being beloved by her? But to *one* who has so much Generosity as to commiserate the Woes he has occasioned, there are a *Million* who will despise, expose, and ridicule.

Fondness often degenerates into Silliness; a Woman must, most certainly, very much lessen herself in the opinion of a Man of Sense, when he finds her capable of entertaining him with nothing but the History of her Passion in his *Presence*, and on every little *Absence*, and perhaps but imaginary Coldness,

Coldness, wearies him with Letters filled with Reproaches and Complaints. Such a Behaviour will in time grow too wearisome to be endured; the most ardent Affection may be tired with too eager a Pursuit, and *Love*, wanting a place to rest and gather breath, will droop his Wings, and die amidst the Chace. Nor is this Impatience and Rapidity of Temper, always a proof of the most perfect Tenderneſs: I believe, where a Man *really* loves, his Paſſion is as ſtrong, as laſting, and as noble, as any Woman's can be; but whoever they are, of either Sex, who ſuffer it to engroſs all their Thoughts, deſerve not the Eſteem of a Perſon of Underſtanding. When a Man, extinguishing the noble Thirſt of *Fame*, neglecting Buſineſs, the Calls of Glory, and the Service of his King, his Country, or his Friends, in whatever Employment his Education, or Station, may make him fit for; and like *Hercules*, ſits ſpinning at a Diſtaff: his Soul becomes unworthy of his Form, he ceases to answer the End of his Creation, and diſappoints, not only the Expectations of the World, but his Maker's Deſign. A Woman, therefore, who approves of ſo degenerate an Effeminacy in her Lover, cannot be ſaid to love him truly: he may delight her *Vanity*, but can never charm her *Underſtanding*; and whatever Condeſcenſions ſhe may make him, are but to pleaſe herſelf; for if ſhe be not a Fool, ſhe cannot think he merits the nobleſt Aim of Love, which conſiſts in *giving*, not *receiving* Joy.

When Love animates the Souls of two worthy Perſons, it inſpires equal Ardour for each other's Glory; *he* bounds his Wiſhes, *ſhe* her Tenderneſs, both know to reſtrain their Paſſion, when giving a looſe to it might be a Prejudice: they meet not but when it is proper; and when obliged to part, a mutual Confidence makes their Separation eaſy: *he* is cautious not to *give* occaſion of Complaint,
ſhe

she as much avoids the *finding* it ; no *Reproaches* on the one side, no *Excuses* on the other, untune the Mind, and break the Strings of Peace ; but a perpetual Harmony, such as we call the Musick of the Spheres, flows in a constant, uninterrupted Round.

But, as I said before, Examples of Passion thus managed, very rarely happen ; both Sexes are too apt to be taken with the *Outside*, and without staying to examine if the Guest *within* be any way answerable to the *Shrine*, run on in a blind Race of Passion, till Possession opens their Eyes, and shows the hunted Toy unworthy of the pains has been taken to acquire it : then consequently follow, Remorse, Dislike, Contempt, and all the Train of Inquietudes, which we daily hear of among those who call themselves Lovers. Mr. Rowe has very prettily express'd the Misfortunes which must attend those of our Sex, who look no farther, when they make choice of an Admirer, than his exterior Graces.

*Were you, ye Fair, but cautious whom you trust,
Wou'd you but think how seldom Fools are just ;
So many of your Sex wou'd not in vain,
Of faithless Men, and brcken Vows complain :
Of all the various Wretches Love has made,
How few have been by Men of Sense betray'd !
Convinc'd by Reason, they your Power confess ;
Pleas'd to be happy, as you're pleas'd to bless,
And conscious of your Worth, can never love you less.* }

Nor is this Caution necessary to Woman-kind alone ; the Men have also their share of Disquiets, when, in the election of a Mistress, Fancy, without Judgment, is consulted ; the impertinent Whims, the fantastick Airs, the causeless Jealousies, the frenzical Ravings, and the teasing Sollicitations, those

those of our Sex, who are neither by Strength of Natural Reason, or the Force of Education, rais'd above what we may call *mere Women*, are guilty of; are very near as great a Persecution to them, as their Deceit, Inconstancy, and Ingratitude, can be to us. 'Tis therefore intirely an Impossibility for any two Persons, who are not link'd by a Sympathy of Souls, a Conformity of Notions and Manners, either to love long or truly: and when either side disappoints the Expectation of the other, 'tis a ridiculous Endeavour to patch up the broken Friendship; the old Gaps will still appear, and widen on the least new occasion, till they shatter it to pieces.

When therefore a Woman, by her own Indiscretion, has rendred herself incapable of maintaining the Conquests which her Eyes had gain'd, the wisest thing she can do, is to sit down contented with the loss, lest by the vain Attacks she makes to recover it, she discovers her own Weakness the more, and provokes the Insults of the disdainful Repeller: or if, on the contrary, the Man be the Aggressor, either through Carelessness, Ingratitude, or Falseness; and in his Behaviour *after* Possession, falls short of what he vow'd *before*; he ceases (as I have elsewhere taken notice) to deserve her Favours, and she cannot continue to make any Declarations of Love to him, without showing herself guilty of a Meanness of Spirit which merits no better Treatment.

I have dwelt the longer upon this Subject, because I know how common it is for a Woman to think she can never say too many tender things to a Man whom she has favour'd in this manner, and that she has a right to upbraid him whenever she finds him fail in the Ardour of his first Protestations. I will not dispute the Justice of her Opinion,

nion, but would expose the Vanity of her Attempt. While this Passion continues, indeed, as the Poet says,

*No Follies fatal to the Fair can prove,
All things are Beauties in the Nymph we love.*

But when once Desire is fled, the foregoing Lines may be answer'd with these ;

*In the forsaken Fair no Charms can move,
Her Beauties vanish, when we cease to love.*

A young Lady of my acquaintance, took me with her one day to visit a Brother of hers, a Gentleman who is allowed (by all Judges of Merit) to come the nearest to Perfection, of any that yet graced Humanity : and yet this lovely, this most charming Man, had an Inconstancy, an Ingratitude in his Nature ; which, if I had not been witness of, I could not have believed. While we were there, a Porter brought a Letter to him, which he broke open with a haste which express'd the pleasure he expected in the Contents ; all the time he was reading it, his Eyes sparkled with Joy, an agreeable Flushing spread o'er his Face, and gave a new Lustre to his Complexion : as soon as he had finish'd, he begg'd our pardons, and immediately sat down to answer it. Before he had well dispatched that Messenger, another came, and delivered a second Billet to him ; but how different was the manner in which he received this (it seems, so little welcome) Summons ! He carelessly threw his Eye over it, walk'd two or three Turns about the Room, yaun'd, gave a scornful Smile, and at last made a shift to draw out these Words to the Bearer ; *Tell the Person*, said he,

he, that I have had a world of Business—— that the Weather has been bad—— and a thousand things have happened to prevent the Visit I intended; but I think I shall be there in a day or two. His Sister, who was no stranger to his Humour, presently guess'd the Truth, and observing he put both these Letters into his Pocket-Book, which lay carelessly on the Table, whisper'd to me, that she would steal it, if she cou'd get a convenient opportunity; immediately one offer'd *à propos*: a Gentleman who had some private Business with him, coming to see him, he carried him into the next Room, and in the mean time, she, not regarding his Displeasure, to satisfy her Curiosity, took out both the Letters, and making an Excuse to come away soon after he returned, went home with me, where we had the pleasure of examining our Theft. The first Letter, that which so much transported him, was worded (for I kept it with a design to publish) as follows:

Dr Sur,

I Long to se you, and haueing this Opurtunity of my Housbands been abrawd to nite, send to aquaent you I should be glad of your Company if not better ingadged. Pray come about ten of the clock, that my peepel may noe nothing of the matter. I am, Dr Dr Sur,

Yr. humbel Sarvant and

faethful Lovear.

The other was :

I F I never was worthy of your Affection, why did you take so much pains to persuade me to an opinion I was so? And, if you thought I was, how am I alter'd, since that happy Time? In vain you wou'd conceal my Misfortune, I too well know the difference between Complaisance and Tenderness, and shou'd think it much more generous in you, to confess the Truth, than by affecting a Passion you no longer feel, endeavour to keep up a real one in me: Inconstancy is natural, but Deceit is the greatest Villany a Man can be guilty of; the one I can forgive, the other never! However, you have nothing to fear from my Resentment; I have loved you, and ever shall, too truly to be capable of doing you any hurt, were it in my power: all I beg, is the Favour of one farewell Visit, and you no more shall be troubled with the Complaints or Upbraidings of

Your Unfortunate.

This last Letter came (as his Sister informed me, who happened to be acquainted with the Lady, and knew her hand) from a Woman who had no Foible, but her Love to him—from a Woman he had been indefatigable to gain, and in whose Possession he once plac'd his highest Felicity—Yet, see the Instability of an amorous Disposition! A new Object no sooner came in his way, than he grew weary of the old one, and for one of the most despicable of her Sex, (as we guess by her manner of writing) relinquish'd the most accomplish'd and agreeable.

But

But to come to a conclusion, for I have already drawn out this Discourse to a length beyond what I intended, there is nothing a Woman can do more to the prejudice of her Peace of Mind, her Honour, and her Reputation, than the encouraging a Correspondence of this kind: nor can any Motives whatever, that shall induce her to it, be reconciled to Reason, or to Prudence. I have touch'd with as much Brevity as the Subjects wou'd admit, on the several Causes which lead to this Extravagance, and pointed out some few of the Inconveniencies which attend it. If the little I have done, may give occasion to some abler Pen to expose them more effectually, I shall think myself happy in having given a hint, which improv'd, may be of so general a Service to my Sex.



F I N I S.

(29)

Speedily will be publish'd, a Book entitled,

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